

Esquire

THE MAGAZINE FOR MEN

OCTOBER 1996

The Big Dog Gets the Girl

*After 30 years of feminism,
the return of the Alpha Male*
By Michael Segell

Ken Fuso

**Kickin' Pills and Butt
with Brett Favre**

Robert Ulen Butler
**JFK Secretly Attends
Jackie's Auction!**

David Blum
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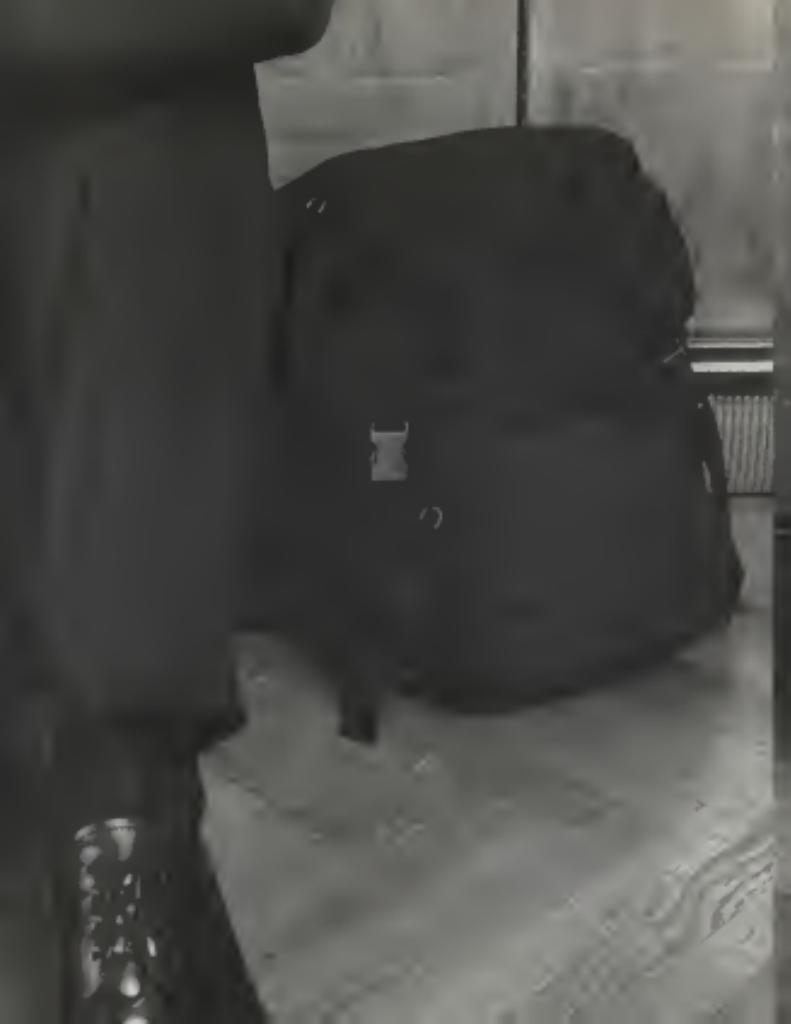
THE POWER OF A PERFECT SUIT

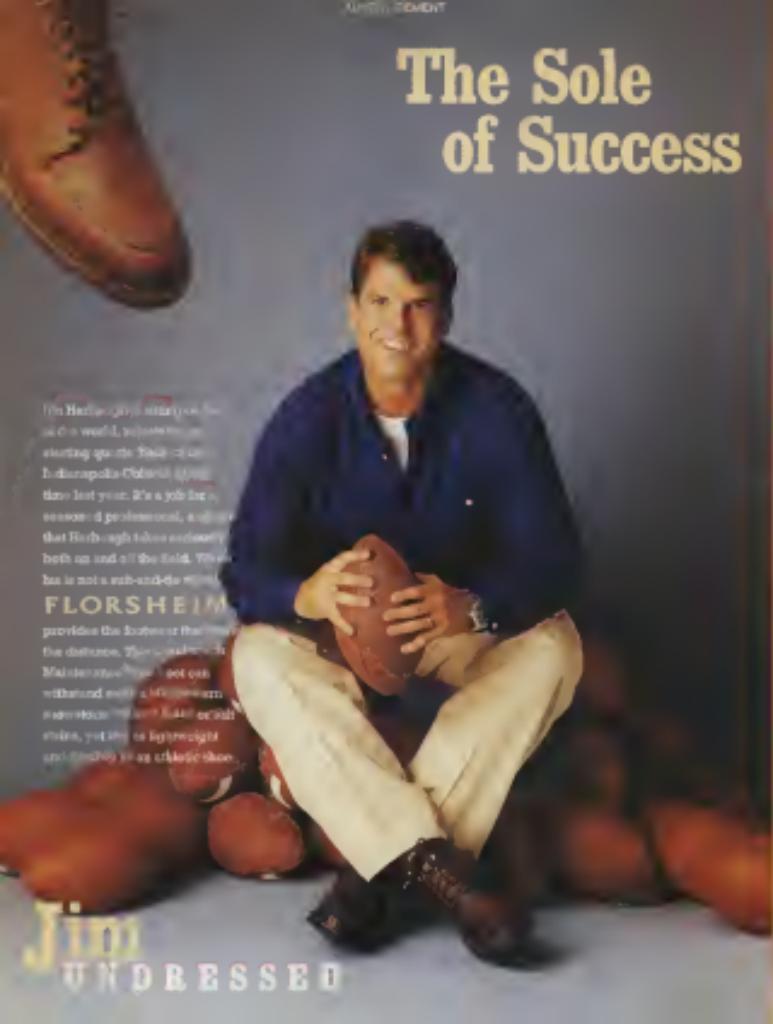


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The Sole of Success

Jim Harbaugh, after spending his whole life in the shadows, is finally starting to make a name for himself. He's been a college coach for three years, and last year, he became a professional, a coach that Harbaugh likes because he's both on and off the field. What he is not is a suit-and-tie kind of guy.

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Harbaugh DRESSED

With a coaching career in his sights, Jim knows how to dress to impress. "Captain Comeback" is the name of the play on Harbaugh's mind. The classic malibu moccasin looks great with any outfit.

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Esquire

OCTOBER 1996 • VOLUME 128 • NO. 4

FEATURES

The Second Coming of the Alpha Male 74

By MICHAEL SIEGEL

After thirty million years of evolution, three thousand years of civilization, and thirty years of feminism, it's time to put the man back in macho. By balancing traditional male virtues—aggressiveness, courage, power—with new emotional insight, you can unleash the big dog within.

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COVER PHOTOGRAPH BY LUCIA PERARINI

OCTOBER 1996 ESQUIRE



After years of rather arrogant indifference

YOUR WIFE'S CAT SUDDENLY LIKES LAYING IN YOUR LAP.

Possibly the only downside to extremely
soft pants.

Though Princess may have a bias she's one of a marble and likes to sharpen her claws on the drapes and chew your plants, you can't argue with her taste in clothes. Then again, Haggar didn't name it The Ultimate Pant for nothing. They're soft as a newborn kitten, without the needle-sharp teeth. They're so soft you'll truly be amazed. Princess was amazed (and she is so easily bored). But don't take our word for it. Try them on. And this discussion will make a lot more sense. Of course, softness isn't everything. They're also Wrinkle-Free (we actually invented that

you know). And not just any Wrinkle-Free, soft Wrinkle-Free. So you wash them. You never iron them. You brush the cat hair off them and life is good. And don't forget the cotton. These pants are

pure cotton. So they breathe and are always comfortable even with a great big lump of kitty attitude on your lap. Now, that purring sound you hear isn't a cat, it's your body saying, get me to a mall. We recommend you do as it says. The Ultimate Pant by Haggar. Buy them. Love them. And fluffy little cat his Princess will roll up against you just to feel your pants. HAGGAR



IF YOU ONLY HAD ONE PAIR OF PANTS, THIS WOULD BE IT.

HAGGAR
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**ESKY**

Johnny Velasquez horses around; acting out with Stanley Tucci, Sileen Mustangs with muscle; Gordon Lish's new novel; how to book the best restaurant tables; and the real way to cook sausage. Plus: Halloween according to A. M. Homes, and more. **50**

**THE MALE ANIMAL**

The gentle art of shoving, the sour smell of success, retarring your face, the incredible sheathing beam; cushion in-line skating, and instant cures for the sudden male snitch

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PHOTOGRAPH BY TONY WARD

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"Airing heads-up brief... talk with spirit in a warrior who now writes a pen instead of a sword."

—Publishers Weekly

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April-May 1990 137th Anniversary Edition

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THE SOUND & THE FURY

Readers

DAMN, what a writer! If I wrote a book on the efficacy of sexual-forgiveness cures, I would buy it. His article "The String Theory" (July) was the best piece you've ever printed. Poetic, game, and much to Wallace.

—DAVE REINHOLD
Carson, Calif.

THREE ARTICLES ABOUT PROFESSIONAL TENNIS in your July issue illustrate why *Esquire* is a vastly superior publication. Wallace doesn't dive knee-deep to perform interviews with players in his refreshingly candid tale on the wavy world of professional tennis. He does, however, acknowledge what has for years been obvious to me as both a former junior player and current graduate student in clinical psychology: As an individual's tennis skills increase, so, too, does his withdrawal from reality. I do wish Michael Joyce well.

—KEVIN O'LEARY
Los Angeles, Calif.

THIS "STRING THEORY" WAS THE BEST tennis article I've ever read, even though, contrary to Wallace's initial assumption, I have followed the careers of Tommy Ha, Vince Spadea, et al. That is the underlying beauty of his analysis: It provides the same interest for the casual tennis follower as it did for me. The article was so fascinating (even though I "knew" everything he was saying) that I actually sent copies to my friends at our tennis club. David, please consider that your open invitation to play and hang out with us at our club (the best red-clay courts in the metropolitan area) the next time you travel east. Thanks for a wonderful experience.

—STEVEN MULLENSTOCK
Berkeley, N.J.

I FEEL THAT I DID A PRETTY GOOD job on this subparous deal. A fine monthly magazine for a nominal fee, Wallace's piece about makes me feel guilty as if I'm getting an extra bonus with the deal. Beats a team poker any day. An original article about a great

sport, a clear winner down the line is points out the insanely demanding place on which these athletes compete, which is all too often taken for granted. The insights still thorough enough relevant to the lifelong commitment it takes to be ranked in the top one hundred in the world in such a physically and mentally demanding sport.

—MATT STREETER
Arlie, Mich.

COME BACK FROM THE BEACH, BOB! Esquire needs Stenzl and Wheat's summer school if you think "The String Theory" was held together by more than a feeble fastball.

The forearm forest underlined the great work he'd made it to the professional stand. Good writers do not always make good reporters. I suggest your editors practice their follow-throughs.

—ANDRE VAN STEELE
Salisbury, Conn.

I WILL BUY YOUR MAGAZINE FIRST if you have Wallace write for you I am not alone.

—JON WOLFE
Alta, Utah

LEE WALLACE, I ONCE THOUGHT I lived good enough to compete on a professional level. That was this morning. Now I just want to hurt my pen and paper out the window and play some tennis.

—ERIC JOHNSON
North Adams, Mass.

I WILL FOREVER BE GRATEFUL TO Wallace for reaffirming the validity of my "inna nivvva" defensive style of professional tennis. Here's to those of us who cherish the Zen notion of winning merely by hanging in until the other guy goes.

—TOM BAKER
Searcy, Arkansas

A READER FROM HIS PERSONAL VIEW on Andre and Andre, Wallace's take on the mysteries of professional tennis was delightful. Esquire may never find another writer who can articulate the subtle multiplicity—coaches/players/dynamic, individual/commentary, and

psychosocial behavioral characteristics—of professional tennis, or any other sport for that matter. If he Wallace has I found his study both provocative and evocative, as he dug deep beneath the surface of an otherwise mundane sport. I would love to read his take on the sport that I believe is the most beautiful and aristocratic: squash. Until then, I will continue onward to *Esquire*.

—W. J. VILLARI
West Palm Beach, Fla.

WALLACE'S OBSERVATIONS WERE SO profound and so anticipated by any other tennis article that I can comfortably say I will never have to read another article about the sport again. Wallace's talent as a writer is proportional to Agassi's as a tennis player.

—JOHN WEINSTEIN
President R.T.

WALLACE'S ARTICLE WAS A TRUE delight to read. It accomplishes what any good magazine article or piece of writing should (but often fails to do), and that is to enable the reader to enter a new and different world. My understanding of and appreciation for the game and the world of tennis have been considerably broadened. And neither than being a distraction, the footnotes were brilliant and illuminating.

—BENJAMIN BODDORF
Berkeley Springs, W. Va.

ENTHAL, SOMEONE WITH WHAT IT takes to write the truth about the sport of tennis. I've read that rag they call *Esquire* for fifteen years, and it never ran a story with the depth and understanding of "The String Theory."

—BRUCE UNDERWOOD
San Francisco, Calif.

WALLACE'S PIECE IS AN EPISTROPAGATRY of the first order. It's Pheonix with strands. The web of Wallace's non-so-detached and highly nuanced observations (full notes and footnotes with the same exactingness) combine with the web of his ability to string words together like pearls to provide a rich tapestry of the tour. Indeed, if your author could rip the ball down the line with the same penetrating accuracy with which he observes and

nautica





THE SOUND & THE FURY

chondra, but song-food bastard Agnes might be forced into another life of work—perhaps something less painful and less annoying. Thank you for giving Wallace the chance to unthink.

—JOHN P. STONE
Whitewater, Wis.

IT WAS REALLY DIFFICULT TO STOP laughing with laughter long enough to write. That terrible article by Wallace was awful—the guy is a grouch. I was laughing out loud (by myself), almost crying, doubled over with mirth. I bet he's less of fun at a cocktail party.

—PAUL LIPINSKI
Macau, R.R.

Three on Deuce

I CAN'T BELIEVE MIKE LUPICA MISSED the chance to give a Deuce to Sports Illustrated (The Sporting Life, July). The picture SI ran of unique John McElroy as he lay dying at home plate was in terribly bad taste and an abomination of the sporting image that the magazine attempts to portray. In terms of callousness and disregard to McElroy, Marge Schott has done no worse than the magazine. On the other hand, at least she is what she claims to be: SI proved that it isn't willing to live up to its own principles. In fact, a Deuce is probably too good for them.

—S. GLENN HARRIS
Lafayette, Ind.

HOW ABOUT JINGLING THE PRIMROSE of the Dallas Cowboys once in a while? They did win the Super Bowl, for God's sake. They have the best quarterback-and-waiting-back combination in the game in Daktronics and Smith, one of the best receivers in football in Irvin, and an all-world athlete in Deion Sanders (for whom your award is named). Why don't people bathe the agent once in a while? They whined and cried after the Redskins flew in best there. Leave the Cowboys alone or at least give them equal treatment. Also, Deion Sanders head-bangs a referee, gets a six-game suspension, and no one says Deuce? Seems to me the award should be renamed the Redskins.

—THOMAS SHAW
Audubon Air Free Base
Camp Springs, Md.

THE SEIGNE WAS BETTER THAN I ever did say. Lupica is the ideal host. Look out, Whoops! And the Joan Rivers postshow on ED was great. I love to hear the consonances of the waitstaff as they serve. Glad Joan knew to keep away from Alison Brie.

—JOHN STERK
Bronx, New York, N.Y.

Fiction Fighting

WE'RE TELLERS OF SEA STORIES. I wouldn't like to lay claim to a colorful and pastoral background to lend authenticity to our tales of adventure on the Spanish Main! Rapana's note on contributors (Blackstone, July) went, "I think the word is mermaid" in its reference to my story "Under the Poem" and attempted to render my description of the writing of the story by quoting me as saying, "The story really did happen as I wrote it, moment by moment." I fear this has inadvertently given the impression that the story actually took place, that the characters existed, and the events of the narrative were actually witnessed by me. I should like to make plain that the story is entirely fiction and that the characters and events are entirely invented. I am neither a criminal drug smuggler nor a former fashion model, neither a best-seller nor a cowgirl wench who left her lover to drown in the surf of St. Lucia. I am not now nor have I ever been a criminal composition of any kind. I am, in fact, a writer, and my piece is invention.

—ROBERT STONE
Wesport, Conn.

IF JUDY HAD GOTTEN P. SCOTT FIRE, I'd give her another chance ("The Second Act," July). Scott would have gone on to write scripts for the *Sequel* (the TV series, becomes a regular on the *Jack Palance* show, and, given his love of kicked by Norman Mailer as a drunken after-work cocktail party in the Hamptons.

—DENNIS C. BARTLOW
Amherst, N.Y.

CONNECTION Our July issue failed to credit *Not Just a Nervous Nelly*, who appeared on the cover.

Letters to the editor should be mailed to: *The Sound and the Fury*, 350 Madison Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10017, or sent by e-mail to *esf@espn.com*. Please include full name, address, and daytime phone number. Letters may be edited for length and clarity.

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MEET THE ALPHA male. He's the big dog at the office and at home. He's married, has a territory and still knows how to take care of the pups. He grows.

"Fremonts has had thirty years of books, tapes, and cassette," says contributing editor **Michael Segal**, who announces the return of that bear who never sleeps ("The Second Coming of the Alpha Male," page 76), "and a lot of guys have returned from the good change that makes them men, so I wanted to restore that masculine side. The alpha male is someone who found a proper balance between his appetites, talents, and achievements. It is not based on how much money you make."

There is another vital component to that big dog: the emotional maturity and intensity that wins women over. Now he shows the pups on the family.

"And there's one other thing," continues Segal, who is also a senior editor at *Compassion*. "I have five children. Any one with five or more children is an alpha male."

SPORTING LIFE Columnist **Mike Lapica** celebrates his ninth anniversary at *Esquire* with an excerpt (page 70) from his new book, *Mad as Hell: How Sports Got Away from the Fans—and How We Got Back* (S. F. Peterson's Sons). "In the last few years, I have seen the golf between us and them grow even wider," Lapica says of the fans and the athletes. "And any sports fan who says he's not passed off isn't telling the truth." Lapica's only looks include the novels *Jump Line* of Boston, and *East Coast*.

After returning from his journey to Africa (*Esquire*, April 1998), senior writer **John Byrne** went on another odyssey, this time to Pat Buchanan's right-wing, the U.S.-Mexico border



photographer **Antoine Krucki**, whose last assignment for *Esquire* was photographing two Nazis at the Nazi camp, North Carolina.

"There was a great feeling of déjà vu for me," says Krucki, "because I left Prague illegally in '89. So I could really relate." Next year the *Monocle* Press will publish a collection of Krucki's work in Eastern Europe over the past twelve years.

Katzenbach makes his *Esquire* debut this month with a portrait of Green Bay Packers quarterback Brett Favre ("Guts and Glory,"

"Border War," page 84). Taylor reports that "most of the people who are crossing the border are only coming over to visit a friend, do a little shopping, or go to dinner." On the other hand, the human smugglers, the coyotes, have become as dangerous as the drug smugglers.

Accompanying Taylor to the border was page 90). And last anyone think that Favre—who recently came out of rehab for-pedophile addictions—has lost his perchance for a good time. Favre re-enacts an experience they had on the golf course. The two were riding one of Favre's teammates in a golf cart when they hit a bump and went airborne. "For a few white-knuckled moments," says Favre, an award-winning feature writer for *The Des Moines Register*, "I thought we would flip over and I would land on Favre and kill him. They would have buried me in and at half-time at Lambeau Field."

Based on the much-touted headline **JFK RECALLED: ATTICORNS PICTURE AUCTION**, Robert Biss Butler's short story "The Auction" (page 102) is a meditation on conspiracy theorists JFK lived! The story will appear in Butler's forthcoming collection of mostly non-fictional tales, *Told 'Em (Honest)*, which, he says, "uses pop culture as a way into high culture... And I have several excerpts in the book." Told 'Em is also being made into a series for HBO. The Pulitzer-prize-winning author of *A Good Story from a Young Mountain*, *They Whisper and Whisk*, Butler is at work on a new novel and another collection, which he hopes to call *More Told 'Em Stories* (read on more).

"You could count the number of cigars I've smoked in my life on these fingers," says contributing editor **David Bies**, whose tongue-in-cheek attitude toward cigar culture appears on page 107 ("The Long Cigar"). Bies probes the Five C Club—read the page to divine the name's meaning—which gathers each month to share a fine meal, a few drinks, and some nutty tobacco. Sort of a monthly bachelor party—but with good Donatellas and the occasional Cuban. So, is Bies (who is at work on a book on longeviry) now a cigar convert? "Let's just say I want to avoid some of Bred's problems." ■

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Reality Check

By Jeannette Wells

SIMILARITIES

Write Thou Shalt Not Steal 1,000 Times

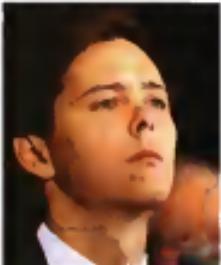
THREE'S ONE STORY

that most word-cruelty **ReliefRead** might want to avoid ripping off other people's work. The hole or than than director of the Christian Coalition was dropped as a columnist from his college newspaper after he was accused of plagiarism.

In 1995, Reed, then a senior at the University of Georgia, wrote a column for the campus paper, *The Red and Black* with the headline

GAMBLE'S HISTORY OF THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

Shortly after Reed's article ran, another student wrote in and made a compelling case that "every assertion, every quote, and several seemingly original third phrases may be found directly or in slightly modified



Reed Covering another's words.

imply otherwise in the most shadowy, profane form of personal attack I can imagine."

Nevertheless, the paper's editors announced "Mr. Reed's columns will no longer appear in 'The Red and Black.'

"All these letters came in congratulating us for getting rid of him," says **Reed Eye**, who was then a photographer for the paper, not because of the plagiarism but because people hated his column. He was "this sort of creepy,

nerdy guy who was always writing about things like blaring some student group for showing a film that he thought was inappropriate."

Reed's office says that he has put the ugly incident behind him. Amen?

PHOTOGRAPHY

Dick on the Lam

NETTIME PRESIDENTIAL hopeful **Richard Lamm** may have taken the phrase "Tell it like it is" a little too far during the campaign.

The former governor of Colorado, who is July 1st entering his rather quixotic plan to seek the president's nomination of **Rose Perot's** Reform party, was recently photographed in the buff by **Time** magazine.



"It was inadvertent on the part of the photographer and Governor Lamm," says a picture editor for the magazine. "It was a matter of framing."

But a source who saw the picture—taken in the locker room of a health club and reminiscent of the infamous **Water**

Dionne Warwick shower photos several years ago—has a different attitude in interpretation. "He was back naked and looked like he was posing for the camera," says the source.

Lamm's office did not respond to requests for comment.

Sadly, the picture editor insists the image was destroyed. "It's not something that we're interested in."

CAREER CHANGES

I Know Why the Caged Poet Sank

ROBIN O'BRIEN CAN REST. A little sister. Financial competition **Mary-Angela** is out of the picture. All in the family's producer **Barney Lurie** had been trying to create a talk show, sweetly titled **Mary-Angela Answers for Rob O'Brien**, his favorite poet and dad

poised more than in million into the project, says a source, before he recently checked in.

Angela didn't return phone calls. Lurie's office confirmed that the show was scrapped but would not

comment further. "It was a lot of a debacle," says the source. "Mary didn't want to cheapen her work, and a poetry reading just isn't going to do it during sweeps weeks."

Herrera for Men

Dillard's

Carolina Herrera
New York

Reality Check

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0 What a Tangled Dress We Weave



Our Good service
to customers: Edie.

WHILE DEFENDING HIS integrity to *Charlie Rose*, the once-anonymous *As This Declares* he had written two books

other than Primary Colors. In fact, Klein has written three other books. In addition to *Bloody Politics: A Life and By-Product*, a nonfiction account of

Ben Vietnam veterans, Klein was the—what else?—anonymous ghostwriter for *Is My Own Fisher*, a tidy swashbuckling reply of *Big Noise*, the designer best known for outfitting *Amesville Cemetery*. And as with Primary Colors, Klein omitted his name as left off.

The parallels between the two books are as obvious as it would't take Professor Donald Peifer to note them. Primary Colors is about a short career, and *Is My Own Fisher* is about a short reader, each is a portrait of an egotistical man overly concerned with appraisals, and both men want to dress as undress women in the White House.

"Absolutely, I wrote it," says Klein. "I didn't put my name on it—that was naturally agreed on [with Caouette]. It got great reviews and sold without a trace. No-one has ever asked me about it since then."

BROTHERTY

And My Press Secretary, Murray Slaughter...

UNAMINATE, Bob Dole's crusade against the media may be a case of "if you can't join 'em, beat 'em."

The conservative senator from Minnesota, who is heading up the Republican Presidential Task Force Select Committee on the National News Media, recently sent around a "scientific survey" to assess "the intentions and Republican crusade by the liberals in the media."

Along with the questionnaire, Genna sent a scathing attack on journalists for whom, he says,



Genna: Sending a message to the media.

"being fashionably liberal is the ticket to fame and success." He bolsters his credibility by saying,

"I've been in the news business since the age of 17. I gave up my career to run for the United States Senate."

But in truth, the decision to leave was not his. Genna was very publicly pushed out of his last journal-

ism job, as an anchor for KMSP-TV in Minneapolis. In the past, Genna has bristled at comparisons between himself and *Bob Dole*, the empty-headed Minneapolis anchorman from *The Mary Tyler Moore Show*. But has also admitted, "I am probably not the deepest thinker there ever was."

Maybe?

POSTAGE

A Little Mail Bonding

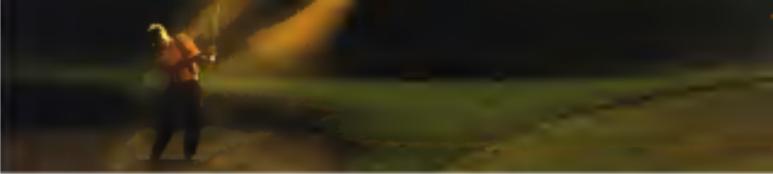
WHEN IT ARRIVED, Klein positively has to be there overnight, the federal government sometimes turns to the private sector. The United States Postal Service has spent millions trying to persuade consumers to use its Express Mail service rather than the more expensive commercial overnight services such as Federal Express.

So when one lawyer took an issue for an administrative judgment, it seemed a bit peculiar that he got his results via FedEx. He was even more surprised to discover that the U.S. government has an account with the carrier.

"The government controls the post office, but when it wants to send something important, it turns elsewhere," says the attorney. "It doesn't make sense. This isn't even top-priority material that had to get to me the next day."

A spokesman for FedEx confirmed that the government has been a client for several years. "They have just renewed their contract, and while I'm not at liberty to disclose the volume, they are a very large account," he says. Asked if he saw any irony in the situation, he responded subtly. "Not necessarily. We're a better service."

That's smart—get those postal workers even more disgruntled.



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FOCUSSED

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LEADING

the way

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It's how

you spend your

TIME

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Solid stainless steel
Gold inlay accents
Water-resistant up to 330 ft.
Ht. on hem, 1295.

Reality Check

CORRECTIONS

Follow the Moaning

John Dean's best-selling soft book, *Blind Ambition*, gave the nation a detailed insider's account of Watergate. Now someone has come forward claiming that the book is preposterous with inaccuracies. John Dean himself:

"Why would Dean write something it's not true? He didn't, he says. His editor, Palmer pre-

winning writer Taylor Branch, did. Dean says he was sick in bed and couldn't make corrections, when he tried, he says, his wife wouldn't let him because he got ink stains on the sheets."

These assertions emerged during a deposition earlier this year after Dean sued the authors of the widely discredited Watergate

book. Silent Corp. (Silent Corp. Dean is portrayed as a mastermind in the Watergate heist and cover-up. The book also links Dean's wife, Maureen, to a prostitution ring.) During deposition, Dean, now an investment banker, contradicted informer

John in his own book about how early the White House knew about the Watergate burglary. While Branch admits that *Blind Ambition* contains some "major discrepancies," he stands by the accuracy of the book.

Maple: *Bad Money* had a hand in the editing.

IMAGE PROBLEMS

Copyrights and Wrongs

THE HUMAN RELATIONS Society of America might be in for some bad PR. The group, which is billed as the "guardian of ethics in the public relations business," is fighting with a group of writers and publishers who say their work was used by the organization without permission. The dispute stems from the PRSA's "information package," which included photocopies of copyrighted articles from such publications as *The New York Times* and *USA Today* and was offered to its members for twenty dollars and to nonmembers for fifty-eight dollars.

An official at PRSA asserts that the organization was acting within "fair use" laws and didn't make any money from the articles.

"This is clearly copyrighted stuff, but they have never named permission, or paid a red cent to the authors," says Jack O'Dwyer, whose newsletter was among the reproduced articles. "We're prepared to go to litigation."

BITTERNESS

If You Can't Say Something Nice . . .

YOU'D THINK THAT MOST WRITERS WOULD BE A LITTLE MORE GRATEFUL JUST TO be published, but according to the Authors Guild survey released earlier this year, The Publishers Report Card, which is based on thirteen hundred guild members' responses over the last six years, sets up all the major publishing houses in categories such as contract negotiations, editing and acceptance, marketing and promotion, and payment. *Warner Books* and *HarperCollins* received the highest marks (All respondents and they would work with their houses again.) At the bottom of the pile were *McGraw-Hill*, *Little, Brown*, (49 out of 5 in publication—ouch), and *Prestige Books*.

The survey also included some uninvited Zagat-style comments from the authors. *HarperCollins*: "Find a good editor and watch your back." *Knopf*: "Don't publish with them unless you get a huge advance—which would guarantee their commitment to the book." *Davidson*: "Understand chaos theory." *Simon & Schuster*: "This is a corporation, a business, with little regard for its authors as human beings. Go elsewhere."



"I hate this fucking press," Powell complains in *The Choice* about book writing. "You're never fucking done." Sources say that the legendary Washington Post reporter—perhaps eager to establish his independence from his so-called friends—has been telling colleagues about Powell's chagrin.

Not even *Top Thrill'd* is

TOP: DAVID POWELL. MIDDLE: DAVID POWELL. BOTTOM: THIS IS DAVID POWELL. ALSO AVAILABLE AT McLENNAN MUSEUM



LANGUAGE

General Powell's Choice Words

Christopher Powell is憤怒 that he became a four-star general but not that he uses four-letter words. Powell—who once testified before the Senate that writer Bob Woodward had access to information about him because he is a "friend"—is upset that Woodward quoted him in *The Choice* using the f-word

ESKY



A day at the races: Jockey Johnny Velazquez, opposite, comes from an afternoon at New York's Belmont Park, on a day Velazquez took Sierra Blanca, on the outside, over Big Tall Banjo—by a neck.



The Horseman Cometh

JURNEY VELAZQUEZ IS ONE AND ONE TWENTY-four-year-old New York jockey from Cienfuegos, Puerto Rico, could nail it at the Brooklyn Cup, horse racing's equivalent of New Year's Day, later this month. During the last year or so, he's been building toward that kind of big payday—getting to the track early, working out with the horses, perfecting his trade. Plus, he's developed quite a reputation with horseplayers as the long shot rider. Take, for instance, this past Memorial Day weekend. On that Sunday, ahead of the 10 James Penn Pouch, he beat the gelded Unbridled's Song, the even-money favorite, by two and a half lengths in the Peter Pan stakes. The next day in the Met Mile, he rode Honore and Glory at 15-1, which paid a handsome 10-1 to Velazquez in lurky for a jockey, whom five and a stake 100 pounds, and with that mattock of his, he looks like a 1930s Hollywood star. The big manager for him—D. Wayne Lukas, Billy More, Shug McGaughey. So do the other jockeys. Future Hall of Famer Mike Smith even found Velazquez up with Loura O'Brien (the trainer Len's kid), and now they're married. For all his success, Velazquez doesn't pay attention to the press—or so claims "No, really, I don't," says the disciple of the brilliant Angel Cordero. "I just enjoy the horses—that grand and the power. I have no interest in publishing." The only number he pays attention to is the 10 percent of the winning horse's 10 percent purse—his commission, if you will, how he pays the rent. (No midyear contracts in the sport of kings.) Still, it's a nice piece of change when you're riding at Belmont, at the Big A, and up in Saratoga, getting seven, eight, nine winners a day. "Bitch," he says, tapping a knuckle to the Formula 1 table in the jockeys' room, "my phone keeps ringing."

—MICHAEL J. ACCORDON



GAJE PHIL PATTON

Mustang plus Muscles

STEVE COOGAN AND BRIAN CALLEN, the stars of the movie *Speed Racer* and now stars from the street rods. But not very many of them. His motto is: "Not abandoned." "Never in the hands of a few." Not long ago we decided to join those few behind the wheel.

Since '94, the former race car driver has produced only forty-five hundred of these babies. Saloon's current offerings begin at a remarkably low asking for a two-door and range up to \$10,000 for a supercharged eight. The up-ender of the new speedster convertible boasts the output of the go-cube-inch Saloon engine to 400 horsepower.

Saloon takes most of the Mustang's unsaddled out, along with significant weight. He adds superchargers, specially rebuilt engines, and new transmissions; reshapes the bodies and adds instrumentation panels with speedometers that reach two hundred miles per hour.

Lowest-edition mustangs from, such as Saloon on the

West Coast and Saloon Cali-away on the East are reclaiming a piece of American auto turf it's been thought long gone that of the more legal race car Callewaert's demands are ruled "SuperNatural." Corvettes and gassed up Impalas 885 are tame and imprudent beasts.

That there's a little plain's socially redeeming about these vehicles to me they carry, thus there is much that's personally redeeming suggested by time in a Saloon's Recard-driver's seat, as we discovered when we drove it.

The g forces induced during the five brief seconds it took me to reach sixty miles per hour were only the most obvious of the sensations the car produced. On the quiet back road where we drove the Saloon, we learned that reshaping the bodies and adding instrumentation panels with speedometers that reach two hundred miles per hour.

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The only danger is of oversteering. Saloons have become as well-known that are offered as options in a recent McDonald's sweepstakes



Pop's Hops

It sounds appropriate. Major Jim heard what Wilton DeKooning said about me: "You can't live in New York without being a little crazy." "You can give that one of a kid's two years and he would kill 'em," Jim John thought, and with that realization I was born. (I was two years before Wilton's, very crazy. When you visit the Johns retrospective at New York's Museum of Modern Art this fall, his love is mostly crazy—just as you'll be looking down and seeing the inextricability of the present. Wilton, too, Johns's predecessor, has one eye open, the other closed, and looks clearly, is one a little older. DeKooning, of course, was right. DeKooning will be the same for \$2,000.) —MARKUS Z. JAHN

Speed racer: The author with Saloon's limited-edition updated Mustang.

Art attack: Bambi

De Niro in Abel Ferrara's *The Pianist*; Ingrid Timothy Spall and Phyllis Logan in Mike Leigh's *Secrets & Lies*.

MOVIES BY JONATHAN LIEBMAN

The End of Our Content

THAT ARE FILM FESTIVALS these days? They're more about pushing the envelope than pushing a film. Most independent film companies are now low-overhead divisions of Hollywood studios that are trying to turn small films into big hits. One company, however, October Films, has not caved in to the multiplex mentality sweeping through the art film ghetto.

The New York-based distributor, which will release a dozen films this year, was born with maverick intentions five years ago by Brighton Ray and Jeff Leyden (now a director) in Leyden's living room. Its business plan became more focused with the addition of John Schenck and Antie Mabu as partners, but the attitude remained the same: "We try to work on pictures that are not about formulas and the expected,"

says Ray, who comes off as part street fighter, part film scholar. "One area's films you have to puzzle over. We like to entertain but we also like to provoke and challenge. It's an alternative to the negative state of mind, moviegoing."

But being edgy is risky. October Films hasn't had a crossover hit, like *Monsters*, *Planes* or *Guilty*'s *Blue*. *Waking* and *Planes* or enjoyed the Oscar buzzings nights of *Saint* *Patricks* *Classics*, though its successions are noteworthy: the Clinton-campaign documentary *The War Room*, the French film *Two for the Road*, the *Madame Moustache* and the Linda Fiorentino sex-com *The Last Seduction*. During the next few months, the company will release its most anticipated

slate of films yet.

First up will be Mike Leigh's *Secrets & Lies*, winner of the Palme d'Or at the Cannes Film Festival, and the opening night selection at the New York Film Festival. Centered on the relationship between a white Englishwoman and the half-black daughter she gave away twenty-seven years earlier, the film is a more cerebral, less chaotic character study than the director's highly regarded *Lark Rise to Candleford*. Also due out this month is Abel Ferrara's *The Pianist*, a grimly emotional tale of survival set in New York during the Depression, starring Christopher Walken, Annabella Sciorra, Chris Penn, Dennis Hopper and Isabella Rossellini.

Coming in November are *Van* (Van Thiel's *Braving the Waves*, a mental and sexual love story about a young French girl and a sadistic old rigger that won second prize at Cannes), and *Reindeer*, a study of women in sexual crisis. But the most anticipated film in the company's history will be David Lynch's *Low* *Highway*, due out early next year.

October outdid two studios for the U.S. rights to *Low Highway*. The movie, according to the incomprehensible description in the press release, is a "psychotropic fable" about a man (Bill Pullman) who goes into a parallel interior world inhabited by his alter ego (Bobcat Goldthwait) and must contend with the more prominent of two women (both played by Patricia Arquette). The reported six million paid for the unclassified film and its promotion costs shows that the downtown company is starting to step up its



Looking forward.

Based on the true story of two road-raging bairns that killed one another on a British railroad in 1888, The *Pianist* and the *Secrets & Lies* (Paramount) stars Michael Douglas as a big-city lawyer called in to help represent Val Kilmer, insuranceman William Baldwin. Douglas declares, "I've only seen two great pieces of located material in my life. One of them was *Death of a Salesman*, and the other is this."

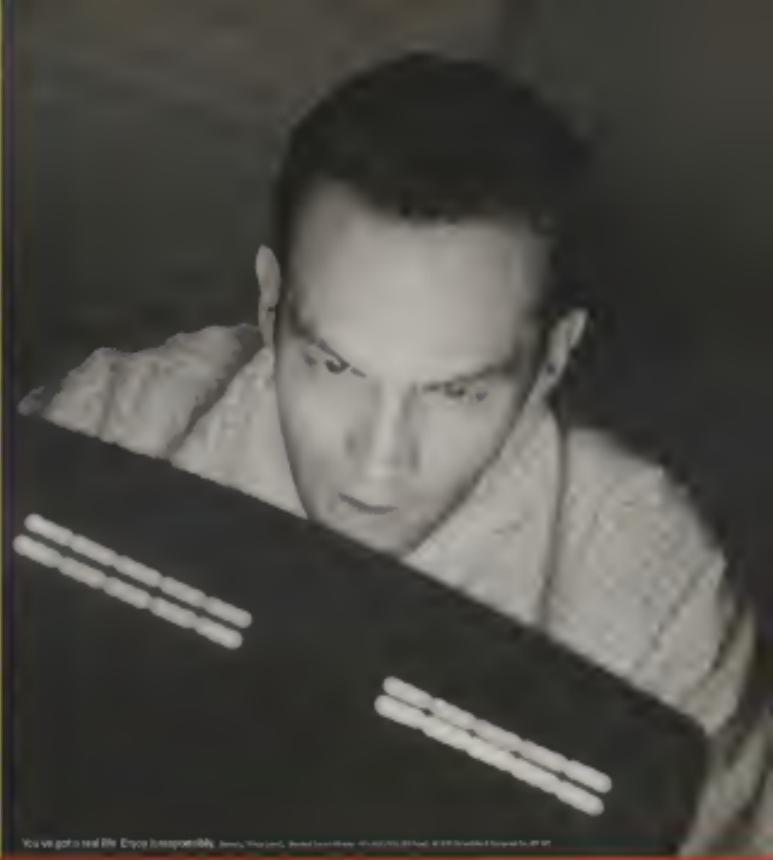


Mount, thinking high of *Monsters* and *Planes* (left) and low of *candy corn*, *low*, and, worse yet, *pancakes*. On the right is

It's not so much
the "Chat Room" as it is
the sitting-home-alone-
by-yourself part
that concerns us.



Dewar's



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卷之三



"It was the Havana of famous writers, silver daiquiris and Partagas' cigars."

In an era when *Havana* was where the whole world wanted to be, *Ramón* Cifuentes never wanted to be anywhere else. "*Havana* was a happy city," says *Ramón*, "and *Partagas* was its favorite cigar." Yet today, more than three decades after *Ramón* fled to the *Bolivarian Republic*, his *Partagas* cigars are flourishing more than ever. After all, they are the only cigars that are still made by the same man who made these long ago in *Havana*, and that is why every *Partagas* has the authentic taste of a legend ago gone by.

BARBACAS

The cigar that knew Cuba when.



What a few of our favorite cultural figures are up to: Jack Harken: The former *Joint* and *Penthouse* photo-boom author (*Sex & Biography*) is now at work on *James*.

"It will break with the pattern of most recent books of historical biography and concentrate more on *James* as a literary figure," he says.

Spalding Gray: Still chattering with his new

monologue, it's a slippery slope: about surviving a middle crisis and finding a child at a late age. It opens in November. Richard Berry: The sculptor is working on two pieces in Europe. One, Level, a pair of six-foot-tall, four-legged, tree-trunk-like structures draped by a stand in Kassel, Holland; and a seventy-foot-high, 300-ton piece (still entitled) in Luxembourg. In November, he'll exhibit an installation made of six forged blades weighing thirty-seven tons each at Larry Gagosian's downtown New York gallery.

Reading **Ornstein** The author is working on another book of essays, tentatively titled *It's This Thing*, his long-awaited Charles Parker biography; a novel, *First Show*, in Rehearsal; and a TV miniseries in progress.

Richard Lewis The comedian will play his first dramatic role, a recovering heroin addict, in the *Pray God* indie film *Die Prezzi*. "It was so important for me and made a difference," he says. "I didn't touch up *Die Prezzi* on purpose for the entire film."

—MICHAEL Z. ANDREWS

MUSIC **MARC JACOBSON**

American Gothic

AS THE AMERICAN CENTURY shows to a close, much with regret, listeners never having driven down a stretch of deserted blacktop back in '58 or '59, feeling so lonely is all that night, so lonesome I could die, and then, about one hundred thousand ways snoring through the static, comes the Carter Family—A. P., Sara, and Maybelle—sangling me to "keep on the sunny side." Always on the sunny side.

Carter Family records, the finest examples of the folk music that came to be known as country, are like interactive fossils, exhausted from the culture's cruddy subsoil. They may stir you up. It doesn't matter that I am a Jew boy from New York and the Carters were hard-bitten Clinch Mountain folk from Maces Spring, Virginia. Today more than ever, to hear the Carters is to accept—no need my own cultural birthright as a modern American.

To this end, you could spend a hot July Fourth afternoon slogging the CD carousel with the early work of

the Carter Family, much of which has now been reissued by the NPR-interview Rounder label. Alternately a few of those old *Vinyl* collections—Anchored in 1927-1928 or the later, *Breakin' in the Shallows* 1937-39 (which includes a bizarre skitthing with singing breakaway Jukebox Jitterbug)—with music by Louis Armstrong's Hot Five and Hot Seven. Push the random button and perhaps the Carters' unbearable reworking of an old Scottish ballad, "The Storms Are on the Ocean," will be juxtaposed with "Strangers" with Some Barbecue," a signal example of A. P.'s strong, evolving genius. Recorded only months and a couple of hundred miles apart ("Storms" in August 1928, in Bristol, Tennessee, and "Barbecue" in December 1930, in Chicago), the two pieces present a fabulous duality of American possibility. Armstrong's exploding harmonica blurring the boundaries of swing and the Carters inventing modern country music. Louis's immortal choppy snarling with the Carters' unforgivingly precise yet seemingly off-kilter harmonies. Sara's lovely (andunting) Autoharp complementing Maybelle's famous guitar licks and Daddy A. P.'s harrowing



Sunday best: Carlton
Magill, A. P.,
and Sara.

CARTER FAMILY

You wonder why all that beauty wasn't enough to traverse the racial divide.

Nowadays, the Carters, with typical Nashville blandishments, are celebrated as the "First Family of Country Music." That's something to shoot about during your next tap to Boston to catch the Billy Ray Cyrus show. Not that one needs to be cheerfully pasty, A. P. Carter would be the first to seem keeping up with the times. He spent years searching the South for old songs (asking author's credit on money for the Carters to make modern). What was modern then is eternal now.

Recent and Decent

Movie **Die Prezzi** (Dir. Peter Berg) **Cast:** Bryan Batt, 204 (Miles), Matt Albers (Sam), Peter Phillips (Moses), Richard Dreyfuss (Daryl) **Review:** In *Merry Christmas, Mr. Lawrence* and *Die Hard*, Batt's a real actor, rather than like us, the pass.

Book **Die Prezzi** For some of the deepest guitar players, there is only *Joint* Review, *Joint* Review, with its entries "Die! Die! Die!" and "Die! Die! Die!" **Cast:** David (Black Dog), Paul (Paul), Tracy (Tracy) **Review:** Tracy (Tracy) **Cast:** Bryan Batt, Peter Phillips, Richard Dreyfuss, Matt Albers, 204 (Miles), Matt Albers, 204 (Miles) **Review:** From the joint-review pile, B. P. Morris' die-off from the ultra-decor side.

Books **Die Prezzi** (Dir. Peter Berg) **Cast:** Bryan Batt, 204 (Miles), Matt Albers (Sam), Peter Phillips (Moses), Richard Dreyfuss (Daryl) **Review:** From the joint-review pile, B. P. Morris' die-off from the ultra-decor side.

weather or not



LONDON FOG

also, holding out a plate piled high. "You have to eat it here, you can't take it with you." He puts our dookey bags

Which Harry Am I?



NOTICE HIGH:
Harry Gurnick
in New York.

THEN HE WAS PULLING open the door of Harry's bar and was inside and he had made it again, and was at home." Hemingway wrote that in his 1929 novel *Absent From the Foyer* and into the *Text* about his favorite watering hole in all the world. "The quantum is, what Harry?" The number of Harry's bars around the globe is a frustrating reminder that you can still a man's name and live off his reputation, especially if Hemingway inadvertently gave you the ammunition.

To set the record straight, the first Harry's Bar was in Paris—**Harry's New York Bar** (5 Rue Daguerre, 15-47-97-704), so called because it served cocktails and had a stand-up bar (draped glass by grace from New York in sign by Harry MacElhone). The Bloody Mary, the salmon, and the blue lagoon were created here, but the only thing worth eating here is the hot dog, and even that's not the great dueling Hemingway drinks at Harry's in the '20s and '30s he got the courage to write. A *Fireman's Arms* of

sur he threw a wetweight and his pet ham can into the street here. The current owners of the Paris Harry's also have branches in Berlin, Hanover, and Monroe.

In 1929, Giuseppe Cipriani, a bartender at Venice's Hotel Europa, lost his thousand-lira-to-a-hundred American gambler named Harry Pickering, who returned two years later to stake Cipriani to open **Harry's Bar** (553 Calle Vittorio Veneto, 39-45-57-7777), right on the Grand Canal. While writing *Absent From the Foyer* Hemingway sat and drank here every night, looking back Montgomery married (Wilson girls go in one part seriously—reflecting the odds Field Marshal Most gory preferred to have on his side in battle). Harry's exquisitely simple and outrageously expensive food has remained as Michelin star for two decades now so don't fail to cedar the carpaccio, the caviarish risotto and the meringue cakes.

After Cipriani died, his son, Amigo, took over, and twelve years ago he opened a copy of the Venetian place in

New York's Sherry Netherland hotel, called **Harry's Special** (591 Fifth Avenue, 212-733-9560), complete with the same low tables and chairs, the same menu, and a remarkable number of older men who come with what appear to be their very pretty European wives. The Cipriani family just opened another outpost, called *Downtown*, in New York's SoHo, and by the time you read this, Amigo's son, Giacomo, will have opened a Harry Cipriani in Buenos Aires.

And there are a lot more Harry's bars that don't have Cipriani's permission. A former captain of the Venetian Harry's opened a near replica in Florence and eventually lost the name to a Harry's Bar in Los Angeles. Mean while, another, unlinked Harry's opened in Rome on the Via Veneto, and there are at least four restaurants or inns called Harry's in New York. None of them have anything to do with Papa's old haunts. "You find everything on earth at Harry's," he once said—and so long as you find the right one.

After Cipriani died, his son, Amigo, took over, and twelve years ago he opened a copy of the Venetian place in

Ask Esky

Q: How do I get a good table at a restaurant?

A: "Make reservations," says Brian McMillin, owner of New York's 46, Bethesda, and the late, lamented *The Worcester*. "You can't rely on tipping, because it doesn't always work. At 46, we don't allow tipping at the way we. You can tip only after the meal, because otherwise you'd have the mother of all legal tables."

"The key is to pick a few places and go regularly. Let the staff of the restaurant get to know you as a regular, and you will start to get preferential service. You should also take care of the service if and when you. Be pleasant and agreeable. Make friends. When the time comes and you are in a jam, the restaurant will try to do more for someone they know in a steady customer."

"Expenses and rude behavior may work more," says McMillin. "If you name a name, they may send you to sit at you. But that kind of staff generally works against you."

What about when an unavoidable last-minute emergency comes up and you need a table? "Well, you can start with the words," suggests McMillin. "If it's really a year-in-law" (thank wedding anniversary and you happen to make reservations, say that. Bag the money. Most restaurants don't want to run special business and would help you out if possible. Or you can lie, which may work. Just don't say it's a first-anniversary-and-birthday-and have two people to their tables there up."

"In the end, it all comes down to being a regular. Let's face it. If it's a Saturday afternoon and you're calling. Wait for a table that night, it's not going to happen. Unless you're a regular. And you've been as Oscar recently. Restaurants people go for that."

CABLE & Co.
The Art of Movement

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MACY'S • DALLAS'S • BLOOMINGDALES

Avant Unguarded

DOES THE AVANT-garde novel exist anymore? Are there books whose language and vision work like a lyrical dose of psychosis, forever altering the brain chemistry of unsuspecting readers the way Joyce's Ulysses did in 1922? Can experiments in literary form still offer genuine shock or references in consciousness? Or do they just grate on readers the way someone who means to be "unguarded" can clear-cut a space around himself at a cocktail party? Oh, the vanity of the new!

These questions arise in relation to the great canonical writer of American letters, the undaunted Gordon Lish, whose forthcoming novel, *Exile* (Four Walls Eight Windows), will surely get under the skin of readers who like their narratives pure and their elegies au pur. Lish's contribution to the national literature as editor have been sorely underappreciated in recent years, so much so that he was fired from Knopf in 1994 and has been unable to find a job in publishing ever since.

While his fame may not be

presently as a novelist—even he admits that writing fiction "might not be a sufficient way to answer the world"—he does bend the form into striking shapes with all the consciousness, terror of an alchemist whipping up ripples for gold. "If subversion is not accomplished, then nothing is accomplished."

Lish, a former fiction editor of *Esquire*, assures us, "I've always sought to be as uncomplicatedly authentic as I can be. I try to leave this morning from Cynthia Ozick about the new book, and the seems to feel that I have surpassed myself in that respect."

Indeed, he may have Exile in a great stroke: a discovery, a brave act of self-revelation, a striking bolt in the summer darkness of sorrow. It is also funny, displaying the monegrasses and a appalling grace of a drunk dancing on the bar in *exile* as if it were. Mourning has never been quite so edenic, so winsome, so self-effacing. The novel features letters composed by one Gordon Lish in the aftermath of the death of his wife, Barbara, from a long, de-



bilizing disease. "It is and is not auto-biographical, it's a deformation imposed upon a deformation," Lish says. The letters wheeze, implore, exclaim, apologize, and accuse. In several, he begs a permanent clock of doom to stop impatiencing that has woken up for duty. In another, he demands that one

of his wife's former suitors show him her tits. A couple of letters are addressed to his late wife. He describes to her a recent dalliance: "She does this thing with her head," he writes. " Didn't you do something with something?"

Some of the news and confessions seem too present, even tedious. But in the best of instances, the book possesses a sort of broken eloquence and finds like part of the gloriously Jewish tradition of telling God by offering up the natural unshornness of one's own most private thoughts and habits, a dare against the dogma that controls the ugly truth. To eat a hamster, Exile suggests to transgress divine

"If you are not completely satisfied, send back the unused portion, and we'll drink it."

—Booker T.



but has reached the peak of its flavor.

It's certainly not the easiest or the fastest way to make bourbon. But no one



one can imagine. The man is expected to drink what he makes. And no matter how much

comes to spreading the word about bourbon drawn straight from the barrel, success and wealth. His bourbon Booker's

Booker's Bourbon is aged between six and eight years, depending on the whims of the Kentucky weather. The one who decides when the time is right for harvest is Booker himself, who carries on the family tradition of tasting to see whether the hor-



is ripe for Booker's

and a shot of

bourbon

is in

the

glass.



The Real Classic Rock

Can you imagine Keith Richards coming home from a hard day in the studio, slumping down in the couch, popping open a cold one, turning on the stereo, and grooving to... "Moonglow"? Can you imagine the premise behind *Exile on Classical Street*, a new CD from Louis Armstrong, Stevie Wonder, London's twenty-seven-year-old project manager, and the idea of taking rock solid to select their favorite classical recordings and then releasing the results on an eclectic compilation CD? Along with Richards, rockers Bruce, Michael Stipe, Flea, Gossels, Elton John, and others picked short classical works as excerpts for Eddie the composer's representative outside *Wrecked*, *Defenky*, and *Parade*. (The performances come mostly from London's large classical catalog.) Perhaps if the project will go to the *GRAMMY* Foundation, a non-profit organization that promotes music education, Good gods might just be tempted to give Eddie Grammys Tonight!—aspirations chosen by Eddie impersonators or Latvian pianist Raimonds Berzins. —KAREN BROWN

Like everyone else*, "because." I bite into the chocolate, a molasses mixture of chocolate, porter, and maple. It works.



BIG COSTUME: Beware—one of your Halloween-party throwing friends might actually insist on costumes this year. That's a scary thought. Sure, the first two instances of mayhem are always fun in your Lip Sync-monster-From-Canada group, but then you spend the rest of the night trying to keep that paper-mache wimp from falling off entirely. Try to avoid this year's obvious choices: the shiny skin from *Independence Day*, clever presidential candidates, the much-hated very racists from the Olympics (above right) and, for the second year in a row, the easy-to-impressus *Crabsong* (Oh, rather hot poker slacks—all you need is a hood, classy aviator shades, and a finley mustache.) For an easy, inexpensive last-minute costume, wear all black clothes and attach one end of a fishing line to the stockings as you move at the party. Let the line gradually unspool as you move around the room. When exhausted and irritated guests demand to know what your costume is, explain: You are a spider.

BOB DODDS: Profound unapressibly in *See Throughs*. Shredder is a decidedly ardent underground sort in *Bobbed*. He's shat on with deliberate relish in *Task, Brown, and Marks* as anapompe and tells the absolutely story of a train-hopping drifter who robes humans from city to city as a sort of an estranged old friend. Once the haves start terrorizing, read *43* to Berk Productions, P.O. Box 942894, San Francisco, California 94144.



2ND KNOCKOUT!

Muhammad Ali, Mike Tyson, and John Cesar Chavez are just a few of the legends who shadowboxed in one famously gritty apartment near the (now defunct) Times Square Gym. At a time when boxers' naps are lower than a kidney punch, Dean Publishing's homebase new coffee-table book about the fibbed gym is a clear winner: remember John Goodman provides black-and-white photos both manly and dramatic from the gym's final eighteen months, and Peter Hamill provides the historical context, recognizing the grim realities of a "sport" some young adults still turn to as an escape route.



3D SHOT: Digital cameras, which were once exclusively for printing or downloading, may never match us, especially if the unscientific sorts don't start inventing at least one new series lens each year. At \$2,000, a \$6000 model funded to the naked-eye-like 3Dscope model with a hairy pair of binoculars, the Polaroid 3D2-2000 (above) is the first digital image-capturer from the company best known for instant print greatness.

BIG REDUCE:
October 29th will feel like April 1st over again as *Yes* (music megastars U2, INXS, Madonna, and Jagged All the Odds) The Clash each release new albums. Thankfully,

Peter Cetera and Bruce Hornsby seem to be laying low (for the moment).



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The Missing Link



Just because you
can stuff anything
into a sausage.

SUMMER HAS COME AND GONE, and with it the season of the backyard barbecue and America's least favorite environmental crime—cruelty to meat.

What we need is an organization called People for Animal-Free Living Foods and Other Staples (PACTOF for short) to tell our national hubs of grilling perfectly edible cows onto fatty tasteless patties that then burned black outside, left raw inside, topped with ugly chemical condiments, and served bleeding red angry burn. Corn-eating people have to eat this stuff! Corn-eating people have as much right to eat as any other species! They have made important contributions to our planet! Beethoven was a carnivore, as were Einstein, Picasso, Lucinda Monk, and Martin Luther King Jr., to name just a few. Inhuman to tell our corn-eating brethren that a meat account of biology, they happen to be human beings instead of nonbeings or lesser whales.

Please before this summer to impress your barbecue in these important steps: (1) clean the grill, (2) use real char-coal instead of glued-together wood dust, (3) use sausage instead of hamburger. Of course you can't use standard

American sausage, it's as fatty as stonewalled American hamburger. Federal law says sausage can't be more than 80 percent fat, and most commercial companies get as close to that as possible. Find a local butcher who makes his own sausage. (Look in the yellow pages for one with an Italian name.) Ask about the content. It should be less than 30 percent. Ask about possible flavorings and possible meat. There's no law that says all sausage has to be pork. A butcher who makes sausage will usually smile any recipe you find in any cookbook. Or consider getting sausage shipped to you from my favorite butchers, D'Angelo Brothers in Philadelphia (909 South Ninth Street, 215-925-5657). This shop, founded by the grandfather of Sonny and Anthony D'Angelo, made standard Italian sausage till Sonny went to Paris on his honeymoon twenty-four years ago and discovered charcuterie. Sonny began making his own sausages as soon as he returned—all natural. No nitrites or nitrates. In natural casing. Over the years, Sonny has gathered recipes from a Cherokee dinner (venison sausage with nutmeg, gingersnap, golden raisins, and canary) and a Moroccan dish (hot, spicy lamb sausage on lamb intestines). Besides that, there's Cajun andouille, French boudin blanc and blood sausage, as well as wild boar with fingerlings and cherries, pork with orange rind and fennel seeds, Sicilian pork with manzana and provolone, salmon shrimp, and even vegetarian sausages, available in beef, lamb, or vegetable protein casings. Anthony developed a low-salt cholesterol-buster turkey sausage. "The only turkey sausage I know of," says Sonny, "that's made of breast, not leg."

To cook sausage on your grill, prick the skin with a fork to let the fat out. Put it on a big square of aluminum foil. Fold up the sides of the foil. Add half a cup of water. Close the foil. Steam the sausage for fifteen minutes. Then remove it and brown it on the grill. You do not have to cook sausage; even pork sausage, till it's dry and crusty. This has been unknown in the U.S. for years.

Just like the birds in a certain sketch, "Happy Halloween."

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The Male Animal

TO YOUR HEALTH: HOW TO STAY FIT, SAME, AND ON TOP OF YOUR GAME. EDITED BY ANITA LECLERC



PUT IT At a trap station, our novice marksmen braves the over-grown, under the sharp eye of Dave Stiles. Opposite, a profusion of clay pigeons and spent shell casings.



TRAPOUT

What a Blast!

IN THREE EASY motions, Jim Crockett upends the forearm and stock from his Holland & Holland side-by-side, disengages the barrel, and hangs it with a fingeroff. The blued steel rings jingle like a wind chime.

"That's a good gun," says Dave Stiles. A shooting master with the wings of Charles Kaval, Dave spent thirteen years buying shotguns for Devra, so one presumes his we're well-founded.

He's come to Sandanona, Devra's three-hundred-acre shooting club in upstate New York, to learn the noblest and least诬蔑的 of noble pastimes. While amusements like cigar smoking and golf are overrun with new fads, shotgun shooting remains a true gentleman's pursuit. The best guns are hipster and as finely tuned as wristwatches. For today's pleasure, Dave fits me out with a cold, walnut stock and Italian barrel. It's a fairly humble model, only \$450.

John, a retired lawyer and avid gun collector, has brought his daughter Betty, who, like me, is a first timer. This gives us the grand rules: Always carry the gun open. Don't point it at anybody. Don't shoot at anybody. And that's it. Like all aristocratic diversions, this one's not particularly young.

At its best, shotgunning is about skill, poise, and the simple joy of blowing things up. Naturally, it's been organized. Today, Dave is instructing us in sporting clays, a variation on skeet introduced from Europe twenty

years ago. The idea is to shoot a variety of moving targets in a variety of settings. Add up your hits, and that's your score. "It's like golf with a shotgun," Dave says.

We trudge into Sandanona's forest of oak and maple, along a ramshackle oak-rail fence. At the first trap station, Dave loads my gun and shows me how the clays will fly from the hidden launching machine. I grip the gun hand, squeeze my shoulder, and call, "Pull!" The orange disk ruts, fluttering away, and I fire. Wham—the gun slams into the chest and, lo, the bird twists off two mere plumes.

Despite its name—the shotgun, Jim points out, is "the most effective close-in weapon ever devised"—the sport is kind to beginners. You don't aim, you swing the barrel to the target and fire in one motion. As with Zen archery, the art must be accomplished without contemplation.

Invariably, you want to think too much. At the second station, I fumble, frown, and at the third the target whizzes by unscathed, left in a row. I understand Dave's gun analogy: I'm ready to throw my iron in the lake.

But then, the sun is warm, and the smell of cut grass wafts up from the clubhouse lawn, and it's hard to care too much. On our final stand, the trigger sends puffs of cleats whizzing from left to right, a bird, swing high, and a ribbon, bounding through the grass. At last, I hit the zone. The loud pummel in midflight, and a heartbeats later the rabbit explodes, diving for a hasty muck.

"In the field, you just have to go bang," says Jim's master Devra.

—Jeff Wies

SHIRLEY HOPKINS

OCTOBER 1988 • EQUUS 88

Burn Fat Faster

BURNING CALORIES isn't the same as burning fat. In fact, only one out of four calories you burn in aerobic exercise is fat—meaning you're burning blood sugar. However, a new study suggests that it's possible to increase the proportion of fat calories you burn by up to nine times.

At Laval University in Quebec, researchers led by Angelo Tremblay compared

fat loss in two groups exercising on stationary bikes. One group pedaled moderately, four or five times a week for forty-five minutes. The second group did the same once a week, but in their other sessions, they interspersed thirty- to ninety-second intervals of high-intensity cycling with low-intensity rest periods. Although the interval-training subjects burned fewer than half the total calories burned by the

first group, they lost more fat. This finding seems to defy the prevailing theory that during intense exercise, your body burns blood glucose reserves rather than fat, which is less readily available. Tremblay speculates that high-intensity exercise suppresses the absorption of new calories, forcing the body to use fat stores for nourishment. It is this "afterburn," he believes, that fat loss is accelerated. High-intensity exercise may also speed the metabolism more than moderate exercise.

Interval training can be adapted to many aerobic activities. Richard Bierens,

head trainer at New York's Erogenic Fitness Club, suggests the following regimen:

- Warm up for a few minutes, then increase your exertion to bring your pulse up to 80 percent of your maximum heart rate (as best you can), minus your age—or until you're breathing too hard to talk. Maintain that pace for up to ninety seconds.
- Return to a low-intensity pace until your pulse drops to 60 percent of your maximum heart rate—or until you can talk without gasping. Repeat the cycle for up to forty minutes.

—COLIN BRANAN

204/6/10 ANDREW CHAIKIN/TY

A Mind Is a Terrible Thing

BODY WORK

BODY WORK

BODY WORK

BODY WORK

When you're thirty, your brain weighs as much as the average cantaloupe—a mere three pounds—but uses up 25 percent of the energy you take in, more than any other organ in your body.

Using your mind? It's actually your hippocampus, a ridge of tissue deep in the brain that helps convert short-term thoughts to long-term memory. In your thirties, you start losing neurons here, and by old age, a third of them will be gone.

Everyday memory—what you hear as you ride during your morning commute or the names of people you've just met—begins to decline. The good news is you won't notice (unless you're tested for it).

Intellectual stimulation may increase your brain's cognitive growth by as much as 30 percent, boosting blood and oxygen supplies. So hang around smart people, or, better yet, marry one. Studies show that spouses who are dumber than their mates of marriage maintain or increase their brainpower as they age.

Men's brains are about 10 percent larger than women's, but by forty-five you have lost as many brain cells from your frontal lobe—the area responsible for complex thought—that it has shrunk to the size of a woman's.

Going blind? Some of it is in your head: The brain's occipital cortex, which helps you discern shapes and colors, uses a 50 percent decrease in cell density, most of this loss occurring before forty-fifth birthday.

If you're introduced to fourteen people during the course of an evening, you'll remember only eleven of their names by night's end. In your twenties, you'd have been able to recall thirteen of them.

An eight-letter word for "idiot?" By now, you'll know—what with three times the vocabulary you had in your twenties. Do Read the Sunday crossword. Research suggests it can help your brain develop the nerve junctions, which pass along information and keep your mind sharp.

If you factored in a IQ score of 100 in college, chances are you'll score only 96 now. It gets worse: From your thirties on, your brain will lose 2 percent of its weight each decade. It will also get softer and start to shrink away from your skull.

All thumbs? The cerebellum, a structure in the back of the brain that governs motor control, begins to lose cells rapidly. You may notice a sudden drop in coordination later on.

Ephemeral memory (your ability to place an event or remember where you were when it happened) begins to slip—so much so that the 1980s are a little fuzzy to you now.

Exercise for your body and your mind. Sedentary men over fifty-five who were placed in a three-times-a-week exercise program showed significant improvement. It overall speed within four months. By thirty, you'll have four times the overall knowledge you had during your college years.

THE STUFF OF SPORT

On a New Roll

A whole generation of formerly plodding homeowners has become accustomed to rolling through life on skates that look like something the Pentagon lock-engineered from the wreckage of a UFO. But as elegantly sculpted as they are, there's an inherent reason for in-line boots to be made of heavy, hot, and inflexible injection-molded plastic. Which is why, if your old skates have lost their otherworldly glow, you may gravitate toward K2's brand-new soft-boot models.

K2's patented Enduroflex design is the first to fully enclose the crucial cut that supports your ankle, connecting it within a leather-and-synthetic upper. The result: It's lighter, lower-cut, more supple boot that looks and feels like an especially easy high-top athletic shoe. The boot still stabilizes your ankles laterally, but it permits more forward lean for when you're really digging into the road.



As a racing model, the Revolution Matrix skates will run about \$125.

How to Reframe Your Face

YOU ARE MORE your glasses than, the longer you look through them, the more you look like them. Barry Goldwater could never convincingly replace his black rims with aviators. Philip Johnson with contacts instead of his trademark black archetypal glasses is unfathomable.

But picking what opticians euphemistically call "eyewear" is a delicate exercise. It's about who you want to be. Glasses are not just a status to see but a status to be seen. Behind every man's choice of glasses lies the wish that they weren't there at all. Traditionally, they've been a symbol of weakness. "Four-eyes"—the nickname of playground and barroom taunts—says it all. JFK carefully avoided being photographed with glasses. So begin by admiring them. Don't think of glasses as a prosthetic device, an uneasy and inadequate extension of your identity, but as a tool, a piece of equipment that matches your physiognomy—

your face shape and coloration—is least important than other aspects of style. Reflect your personality, not your features.

But think carefully about the subtle messages and overtones that your choices carry with them. They tangle with subliminal associations. Herewith, three basic looks and their etymology.



The Black Horn-Rimmed Gaze

Design: Suggestion of junior-high All-American. **Advantage:** Suggestion of former junior-high All-American worth three-quarters of a billion after his software start-up's IPO.

President: Leon Trotsky. **Current example:** Phil Spector, early Woody Allen, Iggy Pop.

Current example: Carefully proportioned do-gated model—like a newborn Shirley Bassey beside the original grand mom.



The Minimalist Wire Look

Design: Looking lost in the 1990s. **Advantage:** Simple and nonassertive; can be almost invisible.

President: The Presidents Roosevelt, Leon Trotsky, John Lennon. **Current example:** Colored titanium arms, called leeks. These paper-light and infinitely bendable, titanium never-bent shoulder, which itself replaced steel wire.



The Modernized Maisel Mode

Design: Suggestion of British National Health Service (or of social change by any means necessary, which could mean, say, your prospective managerial-level customers).

Advantage: Technical and no-nonsense. **President:** Malcolm X, Michael Douglas as the Bernhard Goetz-like character in *Killing Dr. Dre*.

Current example: Maisel interpreted as it by BMW engineers.

PHOTOGRAPH BY



AFFLICTIONS

Drop a Stitch

Without warning, a knife slices suddenly between your ribs and sticks there. Once again, a stitch has sabotaged your jog, derailing your single-minded pursuit of endorphin euphoria.

Only, so far's it's pinned down what parts as its victims. The best guess is that they're muscle spams or cramps brought on by a necessary incoherence in blood flow to the diaphragm, leading to an oxygen deficit in the muscles. Another theory attributes them to pockets of trapped gas from your last meal. The remainder your old coach demanding that you get it out: "Run through it, lad. Shake it off." But, it turns out, according to clinical research presented to the American

College of Sports Medicine, the following countermeasures offer the most relief:

- Bend forward while tightening your abs.
- Breathe deeply and exhale slowly.
- Tighten your belt or place fingers near the stitch.
- Ease your arms to stretch your ribs and diaphragm.

See what works for you. And if you seem to get stitches more frequently after meals, figure you need to give yourself more time before you're up and running again.

I'm So Happy for You

HOUR WOON OVER the Serengeti. A herd of primates forages for food, moves to the ground, sniffing. Suddenly, one of the apes pulls himself up on his haunches, shifts his weight awkwardly, and, with a groan, stands on his hind legs. He hunches slightly, stretches himself, then stretches even, exasperated, watching the others watch him.

"Who the hell does he think he is?" they snarl—and try to pull him down.

Indolence is not

real compared

with the indifference

the spite that it

envy induces.

"I want what you have," they say.

"I'm only sure

what you have,

but I want to destroy it

so you can't have it."

The jagged

shards of envy

disintegrate us

from within like

the creature that burns out of

John Hanes's belly in *Alien*.

We're eaten up by it.

Early in my career, a fellow editor called to commiserate after the Pulitzer were announced. "If I don't win a soon," he said, "I'll be known as the Pulitzer-prize losing cartoonist." "Relax, man," I said. "You'll win it." "We will you," he blurted, "but I want to before you do." Such naked envy gave me pause, and I thought, "I want you to, too—so we can still be friends." And he did.

Years later, I was it, too, and learned the lesson of the upright eye. Oh, the well-wishers were abundant—but you don't forget the others. A competitor sent my editor a letter accusing me of

plagiarism. Predictably, my editor was a notorious plagiarist himself. Bill, having to defend myself disinterred the Pulitzer know-how, and, of course, that was the point.

It's said that Alexander the Great, arriving at a hostile scene, discovered that the enemy commander had been slain. "Who did that?" demanded the Macedonian. Because that privilege was automatically off to him, nobody would ever step up to the dead. "Very step forward and be recognized," he parred.

"Whoever did that shall be raised up and exalted before all my men," responded the responsible party, stepped forth. Alexander promptly ordered a spear rimmed up the proud fellow's ass.

After Joe Klein was snubbed out at *Anonymous*, the author of *Primer of Colors* snatched a wiffle of grief at the otherwise serious debate over journalistic ethics. As Klein, too, learned, when we step forward to seek acclaim, to be raised up above the crowd, we can expect to snap up the wazoo.

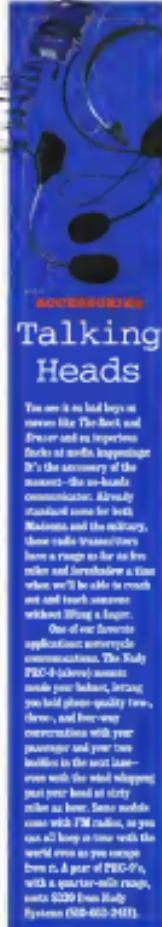
What do you do when good things happen to good people and it makes you sick? For years, a woman I knew couldn't admit she wanted to get married—so her skin broke out instead. Pink splotches blossomed like porcupine quills across all along the tops of her neck whenever a friend would visit. Someone pointed it out to her, suggesting it might be envy. So why? Finally she admitted. Her husband doesn't want children, and

she does, but again she can't admit it. Now her favorite anecdotes are tales of her friends' children going bad.

Sometimes we can't admit to envy because it causes us discomfort to feel competitive—and then, what if we don't win? Better to deny. Wrong. Envy will out. Acknowledgment flakes it out in the open, loosens its obstinate grip. You come out ahead if you can convert your envy from negative resentment to mature aggression.

When editorial cartoonist Mike Peters and his wife and daughter spent a week with *Goldfield-Phoenix* artist Jim Davis, the interstellar popularity of *Dawn's* comic strip was well established, and he had the urge to prove it—a Lawyer, a gulfion, a taxman, a Verbalist like him. The Peterses were impressed, especially their little girl. By the second day of their visit, Mike noticed that nine-year-old Tracy had started calling them "Mom" and "Dad." Cool. They all laughed. By week's end, as they were saying goodbyes in the driveway, Tracy was nowhere to be found. Suddenly, she appeared in the upstairs window. "Tracy, what are you doing up there?" her mother scolded. "It's time to go!" "Goodbye, Mr. and Mrs. Peters!" she called to her parents.

On the long drive home, they rode in silence, which was broken finally by a voice from the backseat: "Why aren't you a cartoonist?" Tracy demanded of her father. "I am a cartoonist," he answered through clenched teeth. The next day Mike went out and started his own comic strip. It



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Kenneth Cole
1-800-KEN COLE

BUBBA II: THE RETURN

Presenting Esquire's extremely audacious predictions for Bill Clinton's second term

A LONG TIME AGO, AN EDITOR tools me to lunch to muse with what he surely believed would be a phone assignment for the upcoming presidential campaign. "You can be our man on the issues," Even now, I shudder at the memory. I could just picture myself, surrounded by editor stated position papers, struggling to patch together a salaried already headlined THE CANDIDATE STRUCK OUT ON THE ENVIRONMENT. Needless to say, I crunched back to the office to type up my resume.

Campaign issues per se are not the problem. With Bill Clinton destined for reelection by fire and GOP folly, what aches my gut is the media's dismal coverage of his plans for the second term.

Put the poor voter Can anyone divine the truth with the press presents unvarnished versions of the logrolling logorrhea of Clinton's campaign speeches—with their incessant accusations of the fence and enough dead-eyed references to children to satisfy a convention of pedophiles? Glare-eyed scrutiny of the president's first term need also provide lousy predictive value. Does it matter that Clinton once actually wanted to name Bob Ray Lemeni his defense secretary or that he signed the Family Leave Act? Then there are the inevitable banalities of the talking heads of the political-scientific trade—those would-be Bill Schneiders and Norm Ornstein, with their ever-helpful parables from prior second terms. Somehow, I doubt that Clinton is likely to escalate the war in Vietnam or unleash Eddie North from the White House basement. What, then, do we have to go on?

For now, we can predict the contours of Clinton's next four years in office. But doing so requires bold intuitive leaps just as the earthbound factors of insurance political coverage began with the solid psychoglot truth that Clinton's character, for all his malleability, has been fixed by a half century of life. The president will always desperately crave public approval, but now as he stakes the final leg, he will probably also revert to some of the less disciplined habits of his earliest administration. (A charitable interpretation: more presidential golf.)

After the secretary of the second term that Morris will ride off into the sunset, with few Democrats aside from the president himself shouting, "Come back, Sime!" Ben will Morrison live on in Clinton's heart long after the moderator of triangulation has crept back into the patiently waiting arms of Senate majority leader Tom Daschle? The smart-money bet is that some mad muddles are forever. Clinton has internalized the notion that the final days of the millennium demand a down-to-earth, no-nonsense description of his closest leaders—the president as motivational speaker and could confidante. In-the-loop analysts call it the "I'm on me" presidency. If that hasn't sent you reeling off to the Reform party, you may spy a glint

of hope in the following four more-year forecast:

Reunited church. A second term marks a president, even one as gregarious as Clinton, as the leastuse of power. There will be that inevitable moment when Clinton scours the Cabinet Room and asks himself, "Who are these guys?"

So many familiar figures will have hauled in, burned out, or been bumped out. George Stephanopoulos, the last survivor of the starry-eyed days of '92, will be gone. So will chief of staff Leon Panetta. Secretary of state Warren Christopher will return to executive status. Vice主席 will take a leave from Interior. Clinton's buddy Robert Reuland, too, will stay to sit at a labor secretary, will pack it in as well. Secretary of defense Bill Perry has already signaled that he will not re-enter. Donna Shalala will get the standard golden parachute for an HHS secretary—a early foundation job. A second inauguration will grant Clinton the power to ease out the deadwood gracefully, though Hillary is likely to remain in place. Janet Reno, the awkward and inefficient attorney general, is a prime example of a Cabinet member who should not be signing any long-term Washington leases.

Commerce secretary Middlebrow Kantor covets Panetta's job, as does take-no-prisoners deputy chief of staff Harold Ickes. No dice, though: it belongs to the urbane but efficientabelle Fowler. As a consolation prize, Kantor replaces Reno. Now for a no-brainer: CIA director John Deutch returns to the Pentagon in the Perry slot. But what to do about the hypercompetent Justice

Gorelick, who has been running the Justice Department since 1993 as Reno's deputy? Here's where Clinton makes feminists swoon: Gorelick, who already did a stint at the CIA, becomes the agency's director, the wife Who Kicks the Secrets.

If you have money in the bond market, not to worry; Bob Rubin will return as treasury secretary. Also remaining in place will be the ever-entrepreneur-but-ever-quasi-stoic Tony Lake as national security adviser. Everyone assumes that the second-term NSC slot belongs to Spike Tolson, Christopher's deputy and Clinton's closest friend not subpoenaed by Kenneth Starr. Some believe that the UN ambassador Madeline Albright will replace Christopher. But with Gorelick at the CIA, there would be too much right-wing smirking about the national-security team swapping lipsticks in the Situation Room. The sensible choice becomes secretary of state. Steve Tishman is a congressional sophomore, but he got Clinton reelected and the Senate won't let Clinton over such a major post—not after he's just won a smashing reelection. If the Republicans are speaking for a confirmation fight, they'll get one that will keep Al D'Amato busy for months. Harold Ickes gets the post-prize, his federal job as secretary of the interior.

Salaries with Congress. The dramatic action on election night will revolve around whether the Republicans will enact enough House seats to reelect Newt Gingrich as speaker. For argument's sake, let's give Clinton the Congress he secretly craves, a Republican one with narrow majorities in both houses. That's not a surprise: Clinton won a weak GOP Congress. The welfare bill provides the model. Clinton would rather deal with a defiant Gingrich eager to compromise than with a newly empowered Speaker Dick Gephardt, purveyed up with his own presidential dreams and an expensive free-spending agenda.

Clinton will have no more than a meager honeymoon with Congress, no sooner who is Speaker. Then the Democrats will return in droves—not out of piety but out of simple self-interest. Panetta will grab the congressional gavel as a federal insurance to restore distance caps to every American classroom. Clinton's problem is that between his promised balanced budget and the inevitable recessions, he's at a loss at Fugue.

The president hasn't abandoned

re '96. Be in '96, LBJ in '68. Nixon's ghost in '74, and Reagan in '80 all led their loyal parties into the abyss. Call it a midcourse correction, bluster, or second-term jitters, but whatever the cause, by 1996 skittish Democrats will be so distanced themselves from Clinton that the president will be begging for GOP votes in order to govern.

The McGovens Secretary John McCloskey may have been snubbed out as Dale's national security adviser. Everyone assumes that the second-term NSC slot belongs to Spike Tolson, Christopher's deputy and Clinton's closest friend not subpoenaed by Kenneth Starr. Some believe that the UN ambassador Madeline Albright will replace Christopher. But with Gorelick at the CIA, there would be too much right-wing smirking about the national-security team swapping lipsticks in the Situation Room.

The sensible choice becomes secretary of state. Steve Tishman is a congressional sophomore, but he got Clinton reelected and the Senate won't let Clinton over such a major post—not after he's just won a smashing reelection. If the Republicans are speaking for a confirmation fight, they'll get one that will keep Al D'Amato busy for months. Harold Ickes gets the post-prize, his federal job as secretary of the interior.

Salaries with Congress. The dramatic action on election night will revolve around whether the Republicans will enact enough House seats to reelect Newt Gingrich as speaker. For argument's sake, let's give Clinton the Congress he secretly craves, a Republican one with narrow majorities in both houses. That's not a surprise: Clinton won a weak GOP Congress. The welfare bill provides the model. Clinton would rather deal with a defiant Gingrich eager to compromise than with a newly empowered Speaker Dick Gephardt, purveyed up with his own presidential dreams and an expensive free-spending agenda.

Clinton will have no more than a meager honeymoon with Congress, no sooner who is Speaker. Then the Democrats will return in droves—not out of piety but out of simple self-interest. Panetta will grab the congressional gavel as a federal insurance to restore distance caps to every American classroom. Clinton's problem is that between his promised balanced budget and the inevitable recessions, he's at a loss at Fugue.

The president hasn't abandoned

health-care reform, he's just staged a stealth retreat. As part of his inside-outside-slashy-synopsis philosophy of politics, Clinton would love to pass landmark legislation guaranteeing health insurance to American children. The president remains fastidiously

education (high tax rates were his ticket out of Arkansas) and fastidious about spending and managing on the nation's schools. With liberals enraged over the welfare bill, Clinton has no philosophical objection to joining them in the fight for a public-jobs program to aid struggling mothers. After all, left-wingers wrote the ban-the-ban book by which Clinton will eventually be judged.

But where to find the money? Corporate tax breaks are a tempting target, but Robert would probably resign as treasury secretary if Clinton rifled back-pocket populists. The Pentagon budget? Clinton is forever wary of retooling the Republican drift-dodge charmer. What's left is the biggest piggy bank of them all: Social Security. Sure, the elderly are a potent voting bloc, but why should a lame-duck president care? Let Gephardt play Galahad in the greatest, Clinton is poised to deal with Gingrich in quest of Republican votes to raise the retirement age and trim benefits under the guise of "reforming" Social Security.

Health care. Unlike his role model, JFK, Clinton, as far as we know, hasn't had any but if bypassed by Congress, Clinton will become a foreign policy president. First, though, he will have to figure out a way to extricate U.S. troops from Bosnia before they become viewed as an army of occupation. But you didn't pick up *Esquire* to read about Bosnian exit strategies—which is just as well, because I, like the Clinton foreign-policy team, don't have any.

The last prediction. Clinton will run for office again—and soon. Nothing as pedestrian as an Arkansas Senate seat could satisfy his mid-career midlife ambitions. And the papers despite Clinton's Jesuit education, remain beyond his reach.

But there is one big job that will be on the ballot in 1996: Are you ready for Bulbs, Hoenemeyer, or Busters Boustros-Cheney?

Let Gephardt play Galahad to the geezers; Clinton is primed to deal with Gingrich.



MIKE PARASERAS

you need directions?

On do you know where you're going?

Has the road become unfamiliar?

— do you know your many answers?

Today, tomorrow

on taking up places

卷之三

You can shop

and with no more

61

... to look for the next landmark.

The 1997 Chrysler Cirrus LX

What's new in your world?



ABSOLUT MADNESS



From ad to fad: Is there a message in the bottle?

I N A NIMED AND HIGH-CEILINGED classroom, two third graders are arguing about the best trade they've ever seen.

"I did it!" asserts Joat, a slight fellow known for having the largest collection in this prestigious Manhattan private school. "I traded 'Werewolf' and 'Werewolf for Boston'."

"That's not good!" disputes Chris, a wide-eyed classmate.

"But I have so many of 'Werewolf' and 'Werewolf,'" pleads Joat.

"Two for one," counters Chris. "It's usually not good."

Around them, a frenzy disrupts the late-afternoon tango. From manila folders, nine-by-twelve-inch envelopes, and three-ring binders boys and girls fatten out of every two in the class are piling sheets of glossy paper for bumper and for brag.

"I have one no one else has!" shouts Joat. "Bonest."

"The best trade that anyone could make," offers Chris, "would be 'Adventure', 'Seattle', 'Cape Cod', and

"Pensouberg" for 'Appaloosa'."

Early versions of the thought: "That would be the most amazing trade," she says. "Absolut really stinks."

The objects of their ador are not basketball cards (that was over in February), not Foge (that was last year), and definitely not CDs (no one collects them anymore). They are advertisements—or, more specifically, an advertising series. These eight- and nine-year-old New Yorkers are fanatic collectors of Absolut-vodka ads.

If you're a magazine reader (the evidence suggests you are), you can visualize these peculiarly precious trophes. By dint of some six million in annual ad spending, the squat, pencil-necked bottle and its accompanying verbal-visual pun have come to dominate the back covers, gatefolds, and corner spreads of scores of periodicals during the past sixteen years. The campaign, created by the agency now called TBWA Chiat\Day, helped transform the Swedish spirit into the best-selling imported vodka in the U.S.

But in the years since its invention, Absolut-vodka advertising has grown into something more than a shaggydog and basically powerless

presence in American magazines. It's become the centerpiece of a craze that, while unusual in its ability to draw from across age, gender, and geographic, is one of perhaps thousands of "parasocieties" assembled or perpetuated by the Internet. "That's crazy," says Howard Milman, a thirty-year-old Boston software engineer who's been collecting for a decade. "It was not an organized thing. It was individual. I don't think there was any community of Absolut collectors until the Net."

That this fellowship finds its meaning not in craft or belief but in an advertising symbol may tell us more about where we are as a culture than any election, Nielsen rating, box office tally, or best-seller list ever could.

As a private society, Absolut collecting seems to have started about a decade ago in college dormitories. "It's a great under-the-table docection," explains Milman Schleben, a twenty-four-year-old University of Maryland graduate. "College kids get drunk a lot, and when you stand around and look at [the ads], it's kind of trippy."

By the late eighties, the phenomenon was of such proportions that it at-

OBSESSION
for men

Calvin Klein
LUXE Collection

OBSESSION

for men



Your gift with any \$32.00
OBSESSION for men purchase

gels limited-edition gift packaging
available while quantities last.

INSIDE INFORMATION

traced the source of the advertising agency "You'd hear these anecdotes," recalls Richard W. Lewin, the Absolut account director at TBWA/Chiat/Day. "Lobsters would have to hide certain magazines at school libraries because the ads were getting ripped off. I heard about resell dealers who were ripping them out of publications and selling them."

The private passion became a public pursuit roughly a year ago. That was when a University of Cincinnati psychology major named Matthew Gold was scoured part of her then five-hundred-strong collection (out of some nine hundred that have been released) onto the World Wide Web and suspended her trading for (http://www.artsandcrafts.com/~baldwin). Scores of collectors found their way to Nat's catalog (it features a photograph of Baldwin dressed as an Absolut bottle) and discovered, to their dismay, how few they had by comparison. A thriving market developed, with some Absolutists trading in from throughout the United States, Canada, Belgium, and, of course, Sweden.

With Baldwin's e-mail and telephone support, Schleben began offering an array of Net publications to serve the needs of the marketplace: the Absolut Ad Collection List (translating commentary for the barcode), the AACML Newsletter (a compilation of each week's postings), the AACML Trading Issue (a special Web letter devoted solely to swapping), the AACML Hope & Wish List (a roster of all Absolutists who know to members), the AACML Whereabouts List (a catalog of magazines in which the ads have run), the AACML Collectibles List (an inventory of Absolut paraphernalia), and the AACML Frequently Asked Questions List (for basics, for novices). "It's really an intuitive," Melissa tells us unironically.

The mad has my subsection only but at the finaniam of devotions. An information has set up by Absolut's public-relations agency means about a thousand calls a month from collectors, according to Lewin. A capsule to the core, Lewin himself is now exploring the case, his personal history of the campaign, entitled (what else!) *Absolut Book*, a being published this month by Charles E. Tzaiki Co.

The finaniam isn't restricted to

the college and postcollege crowd, however. I was drawn to the third-grade reading score by a note that the kids brought home one day last spring from the school I eventually visited. Ad swapping was "taking much of student time away from other activities such as playing games," the note says from the teacher's mail, so "with further notice, we will limit the bringing and trading of Absolut ads in school on Tuesdays and Thursdays."

The youngers may have been the intended beneficiaries of these older siblings' enthusiasm but they may simply have been infected by a virus of the times. "I started like a ramer," is how one nine-and-a-half-year-old Rachel, described the kid's craze.

Her father, Rick, surmises that the children's real move from this stage of language development, "At their age, they're just beginning to understand irony and puns," he tells me. He theory seems borne out by the classroom humor. While the children say an ad's value is based largely on its scarcity, whereas clearly it is not稀缺.

"Like Absolut Genius," says little Chris (not his real name). "They put a watch on it. They make watches in Genius."

And here's Absolut Genius, "wrote little Chris (not his real name). "They put a watch on it. They make watches in Genius."

"And here's my Absolut Genius," says Max, showing me his copy. "It's a microchip." "Ridiculous—it's a seal," Jane says.

"It's from China," Chris explains.

"My mom's not that," Jane says.

You'd expect the older aficionados to have a more sophisticated rationale for this rapping practice. Six decades ago (differences of a decade or two, the aficionados collectors are situated by ex-

actly the same qualities as the kids. The double meaning and graphic malleability—what Lewin calls the "little jokes hiding inside" the ads—have turned the Absolut campaign into a bonanza of laughs on many college campuses. If you get the joke—if you know for example, that the same depicted in the first "Absolut as Rurit" ad is set in New York's most packing districts—you are, yourself, in concert.

And given the cultural values we now share, that makes perfect sense. When our economy was based on manufacturing, we prized those who made things, from the artisan to the industrialist. When consumption was king, so was the consumer, nothing was more revered than the car in the driveway and the well-stocked larder. Now, in this era of Miley Fool, MTV, and Emig, the symbol is supreme. The creation, manipulation, and interpretation of images is the dying century's highest calling.

"We have become a society of semi-orientals," says Robert Goldsmith, an anthropologist at Lewis & Clark College in Portland, Oregon, when "the hippies had last all the Absolut ads."

"What better thing to collect as an indicator of who you are?" he asks. "They're badges that say, 'I'm sort enough to understand irony.'

Of course, success in this Webbed world of irony and interpretation, of codas and crackles, is fleeting. Just ask Justice Lewin. "I'll stop," responds the ponytailed third grader, "when everyone else stops." ■

SEAL'S BOOKMARKS

[Fanciful Web site of the
Guru-of-all-things
curious and whimsical](http://www.artsandcrafts.com)

[TYRA BANOS WEB PAGE](http://www.punkie.com/)
*(picture of the supermodel,
courtesy of a fan)*
<http://www.punkie.com/>
<http://www.punkie.com/>

[UNDERGROUND.NET](http://www.underground.net)
*(experimental films,
art, and applied)*
<http://www.underground.net>

[ATT 1998 DAILY SITE](http://www.ittf.com)
*(credits and rankings for the
International tennis tour)*
<http://www.ittf.com/>
<http://www.ittf.com/>

[VIBRANT HOME PAGE](http://www.absolut.com/)
*(articles, information,
and photos of the Hungry
Hunting dog)*
<http://www.absolut.com/>

[BEAMS & BEAT-HEAD](http://www.absolut.com/)
*(video clips, sounds,
and images of MTV's rock-duo)*
<http://www.absolut.com/>

[beavat.com](http://www.absolut.com/)
*Fans' entire band e-mail to
beavat@underground.net.*

Just ask Justice Lewin. "I'll stop," responds the ponytailed third grader, "when everyone else stops." ■

SPORTS GERBILISM

The media wants to be part of the solution, but we're too busy being part of the problem

THE STORY

The writer and broadcaster Dick Schaap went to Detroit a couple of years ago to do a feature on the Tigers for ABC. Spurly Anderson was still the manager, and the Tigers, at the time, were a surprise team in baseball. One of Anderson's stars was a tough and versatile leadoff man named Tony Phillips.

Schaap went to Detroit with a case, went over to Phillips and introduced himself, told him what he was there for, asked if he could have a few minutes.

Phillips did not thank Schaap for giving him a chance to get some network exposure. Instead, Phillips started chewing Schaap out.

The point of his profane outburst was that Schaap was Schaap during the暮 of his career!

"Excuse me!" Schaap said.

"You're like the rest of the front-runners," Phillips said, "coming around now that I'm going good."

Schaap happened to have a Tigers media guide with him. He opened it up, flipped through it until he got to the page with Phillips's lifetime stats on it, and said, "You wanted me to come around the暮 you hit .397."

"Fuck you," Phillips said.

It was one of the most touching

moments between a media person and an athlete since they used to ride mules together in the old days, didn't you think?

Something like it happens every day in a locker room or clubhouse.

Athletes hate the media.

The media hate them more.

You're wondering why nobody has much time to talk about your problem?

Hey, we're too busy.

So, if you're waiting for us—to be the media, any kind of media—to come riding in to save you from the greedy players and the owner scum, our faces all painted up like Mel Gibson's in *Braveheart*, it's going to be a bit of a wait.

INTERVIEW: WHO REALLY WENT TO KNOW ABOUT THE MODERN SPORTS MEDIA?



RODOLPHUS. What if Dennis had a press conference and nobody showed up?

other than the fact that Entertainment Tonight's Julie Moran once was the great Jon McKay's replacement on *Wide World of Sports*—was not display at Lillehammer's Winter Olympics in 1994. It was like some college course that the whole world was allowed to sit in.

That was, of course, the Olympics of Nancy Kerrigan and Tonya Harding. If you don't remember the story, you

must have spent the months leading up to Lillehammer in the near shack over from the *Unsinkable*. Because the story was too good—or bad—to be true.

And these two figure skaters, in the eyes of the world media, became the *age* Winter Olympics. It was sports journalism—or sports gerbilism, as I like to think of it—of the highest order. Every day, hundreds of camera crews and hundreds of print and television and radio reporters were thrown together in a cage (the practice skating rink in a town called Hanusa) to get pictures of Kerrigan and Harding and whatever sound bites and quotes they could—all this in the days before the world would share in the Olympics.

I didn't cover those Winter Olympics, but if I had, I would have been right there in Hanusa with everybody else. There are rows in the job when we should all wear T-shirts that say, *NO, WE WILL, WHEREVER YOU HEADLINES!*

The rest of the '94 Olympics was essentially the antecedent to the Kerrigan-Harding fight. It wasn't just the rabid *baseball* newspapers and *baseball* television covering it this way. The most prestigious network news divisions we have were doing the same thing.

And when those Olympics were over, the media, up and out of sports, were back to scratching an collective head and saying, "Why don't people care about real news?"

Why?

The answer is so easy that even one of Tonya Harding's great bodyguards could understand it.

Because we in the media have trained people not to care, that's why.

We find them so much crap and just about Tonya Harding, but about, say, Derek Rodman, that the crap be-

comes the real news after a while.

Rodman showed up in a book signing in Chicago during the NBA playoffs, riding a motorcycle and wearing more eye shadow than Elizabeth Taylor at high tide. All in all, he looks like the star of *Penelope*. Queen of the Desert just a little taller. This is sports in fresh show, and it is created as the only thing happening in Chicago on the day, covered on the front pages of both Chicago newspapers, the *Tribune* and the *Sun-Times*. For long, Rodman's book, *Bad as Wilson*, is number one on the best-seller list, and his marketing agent is on television bragging about how Rodman's endorse-ment opportunities went up after he headlined that night.

I firmly couldn't understand why Rodman felt he needed a marketing agent.

He's got us.

He's got the sports action marketing lot (baseball and the music one) he's got on the back of his book (Another author saying the best sale of himself for the end!) He's got television doing the same thing for him. He's in drag on *Sports Illustrated's* cover long before he shows up at his book signing that way. Why? Because Sports Illustrated thinks that Rodman in a dog collar will sell more magazines. It's not the swimsuit issue, but, hey, they do the best they can in the rest of the year.

Why does Rodman think that he can get away with any manner of outrageous behavior? Why can he say anything? Because we keep clearing the stage for him whenever he wants to. And he wants it more and more. Whether giving him the microphone and telling him to let 'er rip. Take it all off. Rodman can live with the shots people take at him, donate them like a gleaming elbow under the basket, because that's not the point. The point is being different, as bad as he wants to be. The only thing that doesn't want to be ignored.

And he never is.

Last spring, Rodman was the subject of one of those long Sunday *Newsweek*s on ESPN. He had nothing to say, as usual, but it didn't matter. What mattered was that ESPN had him for the sitdown. And, believe me, it wasn't like ESPN. Dennis NYC ran it. Dennis Karran. Chris Wallace did a feature on the bulls for *Front Page Live*. I like Steve Phillips, who did the Dave Marcis piece, very much. Chris Wallace,

but in sports as there is of Tom Brokaw roughing up the cast of *Friends*.

We saw it a couple of years ago, when these were all the stories circulating about Michael Jordan's gambling problems. First there was a piece in *The New York Times* about how Jordan had been seen gambling in Atlantic City the night before a playoff game between the Bulls and the Knicks in New York City. Later came all the allegations about how Jordan had lost more than a million dollars to some lowlife named Richard Blum on the golf course.

Jordan won't those allegations to go away. NBC wanted them to go away because the NBA playoffs are a hit show and Jordan is the star of that show. Not just in the playoffs, but anyone he is on television. It's just that in the playoffs, the stakes are higher.

Costas wanted the interview Jordan will be "preferred." Ahmad Shahid, one of his best friends in the world. Wouldn't you? NBC called over like a puppy. Shahid did the interview. Let's just say that it wasn't one of those superb pieces Mike Wal-



**Rémy Martin
on ice.**



REMY MARTIN

2000 THE CHAMPAGNE COGNAC. BORN IN 1724.
FINE CHAMPAGNE CHAMPAGNE COGNAC

A TIE IN NOVEMBER

REPORT THE PARTY AT YOUR LEADERSHIP

Republican or Democratic... we have the perfect tie for you. Our Election '96 ties are your vote for a fashion statement. Subtle and elegant, either he will co-ordinate and complement your entire wardrobe.

Our exclusive 100% silk print ties are hand-woven and tailored to today's current fashion look, and are not available anywhere else.

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THE SPORTING LIFE

last used to do so to Meese.

Rashed asked if Jordan had a gambling problem. Jordan said no.

My prediction is they talked about the weather after that.

Midnighters, journalists, network sports division, 1990s

ever man who spoke at what Wulf described as "perfect notebook speed."

Greg Neri, Jackson's "assistant" with the *Times* and never one of his best friends, once put it this way: "If Reggie lied that a sportswriter was walking his dog locker without talking to him, he'd trap him."

Not anymore. If you saw an athlete step up a sponsorwear these days, chances are he would be doing it for the sheer fun of it.

Back when he was a lad with the *Mets*, Darryl Strawberry once threatened to stuff all in a garbage can if I asked him why.

"You're writing about my wife," he said. "You say one of my personal life."

"I didn't write about your wife," I said.

Strawberry backed up a little, though not quite as far away from that nearby garbage can as I would have liked.

"You didn't?"

"No," I said and gave him the name of the columnist at my paper who did.

"Well, stay out of my personal life anyway, you little bastard!" And he walked away.

Can't live with the ballyplayers, can't kill them.

There was a time in the old days when the relationship between sportswriters and athletes was pretty good. There was always a social golf there, even when the writers and the ballyplayers were taking those rounds together, playing cards, drinking, and chasing women. If you broke everything down, it was still Us against Them. Then Joe DiMaggio had no tolerance for sportswriters and would do everything possible to stay away from them after games. I've gotten to know him a bit in the last seven years and have often found myself wondering how DiMaggio would stand up under the suffocating scrutiny of the modern sports media, all the gear-bits. The conclusion I end up with is that DiMaggio, with his famous privacy, would have ended up like Jimmie Cagin and not talked to anybody at all.

Still, there was a sense back then that if the athlete would cooperate, the newsgroupies might be able to help him out with some good publicity. Some good play in the papers might help him with endorsements or maybe at contract time.

Even when Reggie Jackson was one of the biggest baseball stars going in the 1970s, even when he was making more money than just about everybody else in the game, Jackson was out of his way—when he was in the right mood, anyway—to be both talkative and cooperative with the people covering the *Times*. Steve Wilfert, once a baseball writer for Sports Illustrated, now the senior sportswriter for *Time*, once told me that Reggie was the only ballyplayer he'd

ever surprised—money. There was always a gap between what the writers were making and what the players were making, all the way back to Babe Ruth. Now it has become ridiculous and is growing wider and wider every year. Sportswriters making upwards of a year or two thousand a year, even \$50,000 are covering ballyplayers making \$1 million. So the writers think they are greatly underpaid while covering people they think are greatly overpaid.

Not to mention the fact that newsgroupies don't matter as much as they used to. It is a situation that does not have the makings of a musical comedy.

Mostly, sportswriters hate that when they walk up to a star player's locker, that is the link they get. What can you possibly do for me, asshole?

It shows in the coverage, believe me. In the newspaper business in New York, sports don't just lose big games anymore; instead, the back page headline reads, time and again: New York becomes last place. We all

get drilled with the rest of the crowd. Or the subble. I have done a myself too often. Bobby Bonilla, when he was with the *Mets*, finally complained too much one day—or so I decided—and I wrote a column about him, and the back-page cartoon had Bobby Bonilla in diapers, under the headline: *BOO*.

And talk radio, even though it seems to provide very good therapy for people on the phone, hasn't helped anybody very much. Ten years ago, there was no such thing as all-sports radio. Now there are hundreds of stations across the country, and the people in sports feel as if they are under attack twenty-four hours a day.

The ballyplayers—or coaches or managers—get into the car after the game or before one, and sit there a while while they don't distinguish any longer between the caller and the host. They just feel as if they are under siege all the time. In that way, talk radio has dramatically altered the landscape in sports during the last ten years, the way it has altered the political landscape in this country. Opinion hasn't become any more informed. But if SportsCenter on ESPN is a way of bringing the sports world together, every night, talk radio also brings sports fans together in this way. They get to bitch and somebody has to listen. There are no boundaries other than language. There is no right and wrong. And everybody calls and bitches, feels as if they have the undivided attention of the people about whom they are baching.

Too often, I read the newspaper and think that the only thing that interests sportswriters is being tough in front of other sportswriters. They're not serving you, they're posing for one another. Same with the people on the radio. As much as they criticize newsgroupies, they rush to the sports sections every morning to start raking up their hands about the issues of sports. And the same sportswriters who treat radio hosts with condescension, listen to them and try to make up their minds about things. [I've always felt that if a story broke at a certain time of day, whether the sportswriters or the radio hosts would know what the hell to think

they'd just be waiting for someone else to make the first move.]

And everybody finges this is supposed to be a service business as well as



Alleyoop: Rashed asks his questions, and Jordan shows-shakes them

the biggest ratings, the biggest of rates, or not. It would be nice to see the people at the networks get off their chairs and knees once in a while so the sportswriters can stop paddling their bottoms. Journalism in sports television doesn't have to be limited to all of sudden reporters newswag—like during Shaquille O'Neal's agent about Shaq's future during a Bulls-Magic playoff game. It doesn't have to stop with up-close-and-personal features during the Olympics, no matter how beautiful they are to look at.

In the end, it wouldn't cost the networks all that much money or time, to show some guts once in a while.

It wouldn't hurt any of us if we did a better job than we've been doing of creating some of that crap.

Because there is no question that we have let you down. ■

Of course, some still prefer it straight up.



REMY MARTIN

100% fine champagne cognac from the heart of the
most celebrated growing region in France

A full-page photograph of a woman with blonde hair, sitting on a black leather chair. She is wearing a black, low-cut, strappy top and matching black pants. She is looking over her shoulder with a slight smile. The background is a plain, light-colored wall.

Esquire

THE SECOND COMING OF THE ALPHA MALE

A prescription for righteous masculinity at the millennium
By Michael Segell

DURING THE LONG WINTERS OF MY ADOLESCENT youth, I spent most of my free time at the skating rink. At night, the warming house, a wooden bower with a polished coal stove, swayed with disco-warp and jump blues from an old juke box. During Christmas break, my pony friends and I would eagerly await the arrival of neighborhood college girls at the ice-cream playground. The young gilfers quivered with desire, their sheer pretty mouths with white lipstick, smooth the pum-poms on their skating boots, and arrange their tidy bottoms on the benches during

the break, waiting for Kit Larson to show up.

Kit was the local star, a rangy, muscular boy who'd captivated his high school hockey team. An alpha male in progress, he embodied for me a possession of masculinity that complemented the thumblow of my father—a tough, ambitious, but deathbound federal prosecutor. Kit and my older brother, who were buddies, let me tag along on their adventures, when I was six, they showed me how to enter a sewer spillway along the Mississippi riverbank, navigate with a flashlight through a maze of seedy underground tunnels, and surface through a marshy just-fifly yards from home. A few years later, my brother died, and Kit continued to teach me things he felt a boy should know: how to hop a slow-moving train or race across the narrow curvicals of the railroad bridge that spanned the river's rushing waters while dodging hot police shot by surface-nightly capuchin below.

Kit's sense of adventure extended to the opposite sex, too. One memorable evening at the warming house, someone began playing with the lights. The girls giggled in the dark, and when the switch was flipped on, Kit was lit like a candle with a lonely need. Clad only in hockey gear and cold-weather clothing that probably wouldn't repel body weight, I got to observe what I knew was big, big crudeness.

I thought of Kit and my father a few weeks ago, as I moved uncomfortably within the body-new-age confines of Lewis & Clark College in Portland, Oregon, at a conference organized by a group of men who call themselves "promasculinists." Judging by some of the rhinoceros koala by the radical wing of this men's movement (some of it devoted to agreeing over whether hypothesizing their member would dominate them from within), my role models' natural leadership, aggressive engagement with the external world, and pursuit of pleasure and challenge would qualify them as negative poster

boys for the understanding. New Men. The pressures of their Stone Age masculinity, the confederes would argue, not only oppress others but slowly kill them. My father had a mild heart attack in his early forties, and last I heard of him, he had volunteered for a second tour in Vietnam as a parapenter—prime example of what professionals would consider recent war-mongering male biology gone awry.

If anything was clear at the Pentland gathering, it was that the feminist critique of modern masculinity had exhausted itself and that the response of the men's movement to the feminist challenge—uniting yourself with dark blood and pounding out call-and-response paradeslies around a campfire with a bunch of naked brothers—has only further isolated men from women. Yet the simple reassertion of alpha-male masculinity is also an inadequate model. The strong issue for all men—whether professor or Puerto Rican Kotep, my cohort at Milliken Mex-Mex—was a solid way to reflect the time-honored vision of alpha-malhood in a culture that, for the past two decades, has been conducting the most sweeping gender experiment since sexism was abandoned on two legs.

The fact is that men who are effective in the world are the products of bushwhacked interests and schoolyard socialization that have often put them painfully odds with the new and politically correct expectations of a gender-equal society. What's needed is a handbook for the Second Coming of the Alpha Male, a guide to blending the best of traditional male behavior with the fresh emotional insight—all it psychological potency—that enables a man to win the love of a modern woman with whom he can form a true and lasting bond.

No thinking man can dispute the need to rewrite the obnoxious, domineering parts of the old masculine code: the need to sublimate women, the tendency to react to stress with anger, even rage, and the paroxysm of sex as selfish pleasure. But harmony between the sexes in a newly egalitarian world depends less on achieving some wacky, unifying brand of androgyny than on an appreciation of the good things, ingrained deep in biology that men, as well as women, bring to the boardroom and the bedroom.

BORN TO BE COOL.

■ PRIMITIVE CULTURE, goes the book on the difficult path to manhood with ritual ceremony. Among the Semis of New Guinea, apprenticeship begins with a boy repeatedly following tribal elders and meditating their stories. After several initiations, the masculine dialectic creates a "pool of maleness" that the Semis believe strengthens bones and muscles and—voila!—instantly eliminates poverty. Aside from the Jewish birthright, Western culture is largely bereft of sturdy rites of passage, deal the stage to compete and prove one's worth is given a strong biological nudge in adolescence, usually played out on ball fields and in stadiums. There, the most salient behavioral sex difference, and one that often serves humanity well, is seen more clearly than in any research shelter. Most men are more aggressive than women and more inclined to take risks.

The loftiest expressions of these innate urges are documented daily. Every year, the Carnegie Hero Fund Commission reviews eight hundred to a thousand incidents of selfless bravery in America and Canada and honours medals and cash awards on the 10 percent of the rescues deemed truly heroic. Since the awards were established in 1904, more than 40 percent of these citations have gone to men. The preponderance of male heroes is partly explained by their superior physical strength, of course. Would anyone attend in a blaring paradesquare with a frightened broad prudish to see a female firefighter rappelling through the skyline? The physiology is only part of the story of male heroes.

Of course, some women are endowed with thrill-seeking traits that exceed some men's. The characteristics of successful executives, male and female, include aggressiveness, a passion for success, and a willingness to take risks. The glass ceiling and gender gap is compensation for evidence of sexism, but, as any woman's aversion to risk and the single-minded pursuit of status may still their rise to the top in a Darwinian business world.

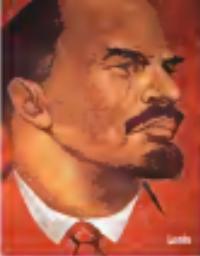
In contrast, men's innate attraction to thrill-props that toward social status and dominance, often expressed in the urge to take over in a group and vie for leadership positions. Today, that power balance, which shows up early, is often tendentiously attributed to sexual frustration, says Lipton. "A common criticism of our educational system is that teachers usually pay more attention to boys in the early grades and that's why they learn to

word tests, this one, too, has real advantages. One of the most striking gender differences to emerge in research done by psychologist David Lyden is men's ability to stay cool under attack. In the names' era of our dark evolutionary history, the ability to suppress emotion had obvious adaptive usefulness. Sunglasses continue to be a valuable weapon in the murky economy. In cutthroat boardrooms, a negotiator who brings his emotions wags a losing hand. And when one is facing life-and-death situations, emotional restraint is an almost godly gift. After seeing a man and his four-year-old son sucked into deep, cold water after slipping down a cliff on the Oregon coast, Christopher Hobson, a thirty-year-old glaciologist from Göttsche Pass and one of this year's Carnegie Heroes, threw off his boots and jacket and dove in. "I didn't really think about it," he said. "I just thought if I didn't swim, at least I could save myself, and I could always say I tried my best."

An adventurous, bushy-boyhood is often a harbinger for heroism or great achievement. At six, British Greenwich gunner Sir James Goldsmith was wagering in Monte Carlo casinos, at sixteen, herding oxen home. After winning a payout of money on a six-wager, he quit home to begin assembling one of the largest corporate empires in the world and during one difficult negotiation convinced his adversary to settle a takeover price with a backgammon game. Naturally, he won.

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Stalin



Samurai



Billy Tramp



The Young One



Mike Tyson

David Lee

WHAT DOES THE ALPHA MALE LOOK LIKE?

In general, powerful men are taller than average and share distinct facial characteristics. An analysis of the class of 1958 at West Point showed that a reliable predictor of rank attainment was a dominant appearance—a muscular-looking face, with a strong chin and large, well-defined skeletal structure—"a gestalt kind of thing," according to sociologist Alice Kauz, who did the study. Among modern military leaders, the Eisenhower and Powell maps fit the mold. (Though the cadets' square jaws provided few clues to how they'd do in combat, they accurately predicted who would become generals.)

According to Kauz, the mark of leadership is derived from classic handedness: Brad Pitt is winsome, Arnold Schwarzenegger dominant. A powerful look also predicted another Princetonian quality: The generals fathered on men child, on average, than their pedigree-cheeked, well-clad classmates. Another study has shown that facial profile, when measured in adolescent boys, also predicts their skill as athletes. Lads with the look of leadership tend to have sex at a earlier age than do those who are merely brawlers.

These ratings show up consistently across cultures. In Spain, the men who earn heads—the dominant men—is not necessarily beautiful but is powerful and inspiring fear and respect. In the Mediterranean, the most desirable men are blessed leadership attributes—bulk, power, muscle. Even in exotic

cultures—the semi-nomadic tribes in northern Africa that occupy what anthropologist David Gluck calls the "Korowood hand" or "male beauty belt"—masculine attractiveness depends on skill and prowess.

But that's practice, go no further for living paragons of physical beauty. The Melville tribe of northern Niger considers men the most beautiful creatures on earth. In the annual gowon ceremony, a weeklong celebration of male responsiveness, young men decorate themselves as the mounted red bulls of the community, parading before the girls as sex objects. Luring up before the women judges, they dress themselves up to full height, flash their teeth, and exhibit their testicles. One by one, each is selected by a rousing tribune, who then leads to his love nest for her reward.

Americans men's concern for their personal splendor is in many ways less obsessive. About as many heterosexual men (65 percent) as women (50 percent) express dissatisfaction with their appearance, and gay men feel about 30 more than other group. Men worry most about their height, and with good reason: Studies show that a man's height has a significant impact on his social relations, his employment opportunities, political success, earning power, and success in finding a physically attractive partner. A study of personal ads found that 80 percent of women want a man at least six inches taller than they are, and all women want a man at least four inches taller.



The Marlboro Man



General Patton

be more forceful and outgoing, in fact," he says. "Boys are simply harder to raise than girls and speak up, so they command more attention."

In our high-tech, safety-first society, risk taking has acquired a bad name and is often associated with violent aggression and crime. But according to Lykken, the psychologist, the scientist, the corporate-taekwondo master, and the war hero are all twigs on the same

genetic branch. "The qualities that get a boy at risk for violence are the same ones that, cultivated at a different way, make him rise a leader or a hero. If a boy is encouraged to take pride in easily accomplished achievements that have a positive goal—becoming a football player, rock climber, or pilot—he can achieve great things by following that course. If, on the other hand, the only authoritative model in his life is a criminal or a dangerous peer group, he will become a victim—and a victimizer."

THE HAPPY WARRIOR

IN THE PAST FEW YEARS, CERTAINLY male aggression (and encouraging it in females) has become a kind of class war, with men and women at war. In nearly all studies, males demonstrate far more confrontational behavior and rough-and-tumble play than females and are responsible for about all violent crime. But, as experts are quick to point out, violence is an abnormal by-product of aggression. What makes the difference is whether a boy is encouraged to channel his aggressiveness into productive challenges or is left to lose his way in life.

The first hand of parental guidance shows up repeatedly in analyses of accomplished types. A study of more than a hundred fighter pilots revealed that most were individuals who had unusually close relationships with their fathers. The fliers' earned enormous self-confidence showed a great desire for challenge and success and had little use for inexperience. As Jerome Kagan, a developmental psychologist at Harvard, has repeatedly demonstrated in forty years of research

on children, aggressiveness in a young child is highly correlated with what he calls assertive competence at an adult.

A few years ago, the means of male assertiveness were given a burst of fire by feminist psychologists who tried to prove the value of a concept called "psychological misogyny." In this measuring feminine and masculine characteristics, men and women who score high in both—who were at once aggressive and

Boys take the rap for roughness, but girls may actually be more—perpetrators of a different, and apparently more destructive, aggression. According to psychologist Robert Carra, girls, at around age ten, develop a powerful, sophisticated technique that, although not physically assertive, uses alienation and reasoning to "victimize a male." This style of indirect aggression can emotionally devastate

the victim, who often has no idea who or even by whom she's being attacked. Organizing social intrigues as a way of ganging up on a peer not only prolongs conflict but builds larger group dynamics. As girls enter adulthood, they become even more skilled at using manipulation, and word-of-mouth to attack their adversaries. Margaret Mead once remarked that women should stay off the battlefield because they'd be too brutal. Unable to handle direct confrontation, they'd end up blowing everyone away when more modest strategies might do the job.

Boys, by contrast, tend to seek with a problem-solving style they've known since their first toy was snatched from their grasp. Unlike hidden female aggression, this up-front approach involves conflict quickly and lets everyone on a group know what an individual's known. In a study of numerous international crises that were ended by a surprise attack, Peter Seiffert, a Canadian psychologist, found that in the early stages of conflict, government ministers and heads of state—men—focused on gathering information, negotiating, striking compromise, and diplomatically outwitting their opponents, but as tensions mounted, they gradually reduced the complexity of their thinking until a military strike became their only response.

Despite headlines about wife beating and war criminals, most men—even soldiers—are not naturally violent. In *On Killing*, military psychologist Dave Grossman argues persuasively that far from being bloodthirsty aggressors, most soldiers are loath to kill even a demonized enemy. Citing studies of

previous wars, Grossman, a U.S. Army lieutenant colonel, concludes that in many as 85 percent of ordinary soldiers have done their best not to kill, bring their weapons over the enemy's head, buying themselves with supplies, and running away. "At the decisive moment," he says, "such men become, in effect, a conscientious objector." After the battle of Gettysburg, for instance, about 40 percent of the more than twenty-five thousand muskets recovered from the battlefield were loaded. Since most of a soldier's time was spent loading his weapon and only a few seconds were needed to aim and fire, "the obvious conclusion is that most soldiers were not trying to kill the enemy."

Grossman's analysis also profound questions about the nature of male violence in general and of the war hero in particular. Is war fought for without cause, is it more honorable to kill or to shoot over an enemy's head? "I don't have the answer to that," he says. "The vast majority of soldiers who have chosen not to kill reflect something redemptive and reassuring about the nature of men. But I'm also proud to know that some soldiers who have a yearning for righteous combat,

the willingness and courage to step up during times of desperate need to fight the good fight."

THE ASCENDANT WOMAN

THE OTHER DAY, AFTER A LONG squash match, my partner offered to buy me a beer at the club bar. I didn't know him well, but he seemed eager to uninitialized himself. His wife, a conscientious executive, worked a baby, he told me, and he was chafing about leaving his job as a mathematics professor and applying his number-crunching skills to a more lucrative position on Wall Street. I asked whether they had decided to let his spouse have a go at her eggs. He said, but didn't say that he wanted all that "acute" backslapping from what I'd called would be the revocation of a pretty physical condition. I didn't know about, I mumbled stupidly, but he went on. "Maybe if she spent some of her lunch hour working on her colleague instead of her clients," he said, "I'd find it easier to become aroused."

For all but the most ardent blue-of-history men's heaven and women's lack of control of their reproductive decisions guaranteed that the dullest old had not

been superior to his wife's. Even Ralph Kosciuszko, a manly alpha male, got to be king of his castle. Those days are over, and the rapid adjustments men have been expected to make in this radical cultural experiment are producing chilling effects on relationships. The inflexible PC expectation for men's big-guy desire is the constricting pressures of juggling career, domestic duties, child care, and other responsibilities. But the ugly truth about this suddenly common condition is that many men are anxious about proving and maintaining their worth as an assertive and capable partner, and the private face of this anxiety is something, alarmingly, in the bedroom. Among young and middle-aged men, both single and married, the most common sexual complaint is a lack of desire. For a lot of men, the pleasure of gender have become, finally, personal.

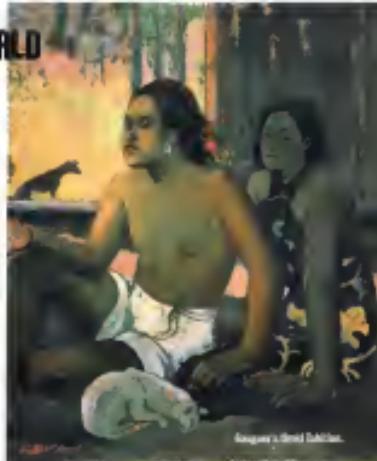
The rest of jolts and vicious attacks on powerful women, from Eleanor Roosevelt to Hillary Clinton, from mother-in-law to female bosses, lie deep within the male psyche. As psychologist Karen says, "Psychological potency and the ability to dominate and to hide their weakness are the most potent preoccupations of

Data on "masculine" and "feminine" traits has shown that aggression and dominance, not sensitivity and submission, are responsible for superior self-esteem in men and women.

WHERE IT'S A WOMAN'S WORLD

In a *PCland*, there's little enough to suggest that sex differences have a biological basis are academic parades. An absence of the intrinsic masculinity of gender roles, social constructivists point to the androgynous cultures documented by anthropologist Carol Gilligan's landmark survey *In a Different Voice*—men thought her quick to add that they are the exceptions that prove the rule.

"There is something virile in the women and something feminine in the men," Gilligan observed when he visited Malaysia in the 1980s. Indeed, the men embrace the natural value of virility, which forbids reticence—and empowers their wives, who are known to beat them. The Senu of central Malaysia, for instance, are totally positive people who have abandoned conformity sex roles. Senu men are particularly skilled at midwifery, and the tribal women make unusually caring mothers. These positive Peter Pan belief that to meet advances from another in person, or take—an act of aggression that causes the recipient's heart to become unbearably "heavy." When the organ is open like, a man simply affirms the object of his lust, and she typically accommodates without protest; if the female is beatable and he continues to snap, his retching is considered relatively minor. Not everybody, the Senu now exhibit the physical characteristics of the wide range of outsiders—from the Chinese to the Vikings—who descended upon them during their long marches and discovered, happily, that the women never took power for an answer.



men." When a man does form a partnership with a woman who thinks of him as an equal rather than a superior, he often feels diminished. In the worst cases, this male insecurity results in physical violence; less impulsive men may respond with bullying, verbal abuse, or infidelity.

An evolutionary psychologist David Buss has said that a modern husband in a dual-career marriage is vulnerable to "mate-value discrepancy." The very qualities that attracted him to his wife—her brains, professional status, sexual sophistication—put pressure on him to

complain, "The struggle that white guys do with women is nothing compared to ours." And black men have only themselves to blame. Over the last forty years, they've lost women's take on of everything. A lot of black men have press envy."

When Bob, who is divorced and has a teenage daughter, sits as a woman on, he has to be careful not to appear too eager, he says. "Only by 'repeating,' can she know that I'm worthy of her attention. It takes about eight months for me to condition her to respect me."

ad. relationship with each other—are lessening the tension to gender-equal marriage with only modest success.

THE PENS AS PEACEKEEPER

■ AS A STYLER, ONE-PERIODIC PENS, men needn't only compare themselves with women, who had subordinated their own sense of accomplishment to their husbands', to feel successful in their struggle to act good and stay home. Twenty years ago, newly minted alpha males who achieved status in the cutthroat fashion—by beating out other males—will

lurber coquettishness models of what a relationship should be. "Glossiness, we want a woman who is our equal, someone we can talk to men to men. But we also have a deep unconscious need to have our potency restored and bolstered by our wives in the same way our mothers did for our fathers. Women, too, have a bulwark conflict between wanting a powerful and heroic man who wears the pants in the family, the way Dad did, and being angered by and envious of such power. On one level, they want to affirm their mate's potency, but on another they

to intimacy. Women often assume emotional coquettishness as a way of communicating, while men, interpreting these gestures as personal attacks, either shift into hypersexual fight mode—or flee. When an argument escalates, many men experience "blowout," an inundation of emotion from which they can retreat only by withdrawing. But replace this withdrawal as a sense of superiority—shoring the domineering tactics displayed by men who score mate-value discrepancy—and empathy toward their mate's deepest feelings. "When men aren't

doing rather than feeling, putting a filter on emotions in the workplace, and developing a problem-solving approach to conflict—capacities that have long served men so well. And men can still teach women how to act upon desire for the sake of simple, playful pleasure. Despite all the sating of established ongoing bonds, each sex still has something that the other desperately wants.

A was old friend, a retired pay-chaire, told me recently, "When men feel adequate, you never hear them talk about masculinity. It's when they

To be able to admit that you want the soft Mommy when you're getting too much of the Tiger Lady requires strength and courage, even if most men wouldn't think of it that way. To attract and keep an assertive female, the alpha male needs to acquire a new power.

measure up to her standards, if not exceed them. According to the ancient mating paradigm outlined in Buss's book *The Evolution of Desire*, when a man finds that his wife is more desirable on the mating market than he is, he undermines and denounces her—thus backtracking about her cooking to complaining about her managerial abilities.

This strategy, documented in dozens of studies that have done around the world, is deployed to lower his mate's self-esteem and her perception of her attractiveness (and the most important dimension in a man's mate choice, she knows) and to decrease the likelihood that she'll defect from the relationship. The tactic, however, backfires: it is a pre-emptive strike against a domineering threat to the modern marriage. When women are more successful than their husbands, they're twice as likely to ditch them if they're unhappy. That fact makes women, Buss says, the gender revolution has in fact magnified women's traditional mate preferences. They want men who can contribute at least as much to the family coffers as they themselves do, and powerful women place even more emphasis on selecting a man with superior earning power. For the New Men, the Ascendant Women has raised the bar.

While love may not yet have affirmed Women's own (ave these few who are having their penises surgically enlarged), the angst and anxiety that cause it surely love. The struggle is against psychic potency in the masculine narrative: a big pink elephant stalking the bedroom that no one is willing to acknowledge. My long-squashed partner can take little comfort in the fact that even the most enclaved couples in the world—like the partners in power on Washington, who, despite sharing single-minded purpose and ambition, seem to be able to agree on everything but how to negotiate a sex-

those glossiness but softening: trophy wives as affirmations of their prestige. But in the gender-stressed ages, some men are giving their signals crossed. Their ascendancy triggers the kind of competition normally directed toward other men, and the becomes classified as some primitive act at being like another male.

How do men satisfy their need to demonstrate assertiveness and confidence in a relationship with an equally powerful mate? The key, for both men and women, is to acknowledge the separate but equal assertiveness and skills of each gender. And here, the women's movement often uses an efficient model. In the early years, feminists first affirmed what men had conceded: a woman's share of expressiveness and equality—and then emphasized men's self-assertiveness to gain a foothold in the working world. Similarly, men need to acknowledge anew the positive value of male qualities that have been repeatedly bashed—their natural assertiveness, urge to dominate, and love of risk—then augment their social assertiveness with a skill more common to women: sensitivity to their own and others' emotions. To assert and keep an assertive female—the thinking man's trophy wife—the aspiring alpha male needs to acquire a new power: psychological potency.

This newly assertive is crucial at this transitional moment in the male's gender expression. According to Drew Weston, a psychologist at Harvard, men have before the gates

may find it demeaning to do so. "It's not surprise," says Weston, "that a couple's infidelity motives can be at cross-purposes, not only within themselves but with each other."

How do we square the psychic chips to handle this conflict? It's like asking, How do you grow up? a psychotherapist cold one. He was implying, of course, that, as in a Zen koan, the answer is contained in the question. A sense of control—over one's surroundings, destiny, and inner needs and desires—is essential to psychological potency. To be able to admit that you want the soft Mommy when you're getting too much of the Tiger Lady requires strength and courage, even if most men wouldn't think of it that way.

Men may be able to contribute the most to resolving this dilemma. During times of stress, we often attribute malevolent motives to our partner's behavior—explanations that have more to do with our own unexpressed fears and failures than with what's really going on. By acknowledging what troubles us, we can achieve intimacy over unconscious processes. In sum, we can short-circuit the primitive defense that causes us to repress stress, sadness, or a nagging sense of inadequacy into nasty attitudes on our mates.

Understanding how markedly differently men and women respond to erosion and erosion is crucial here. Men are frequently oblivious to their emotional states—an advantage while searching for air-crack women in too feet of water but a serious impediment

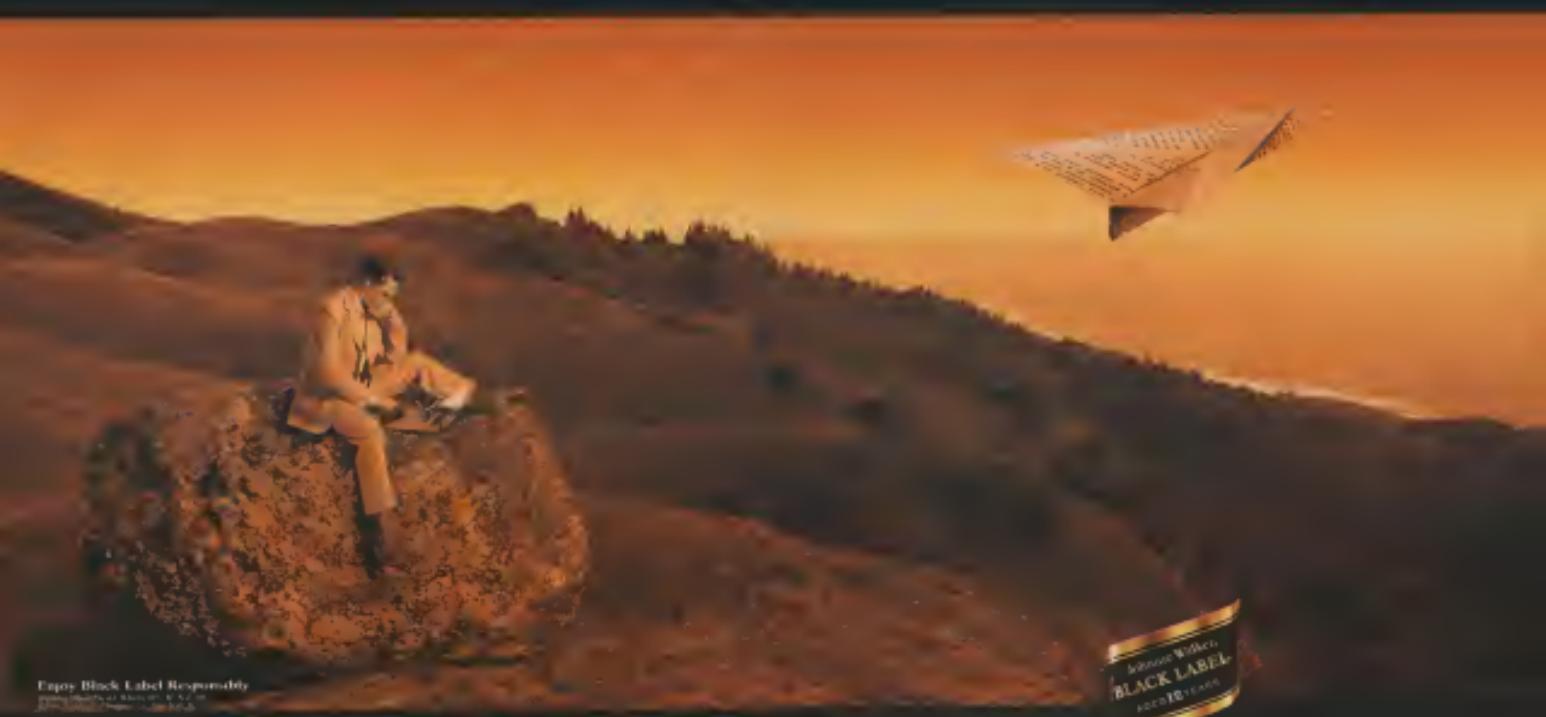
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feeling less than capable that you hear a lot of talk about this thing called manhood." Like Achillea, the Greek eminence of masculinity, men who gather regularly to discuss manhood could more profitably turn their energies away from self-absorption toward practical problem solving. They might then carry apart the middle of their relationship to the New Women—expanding their understanding of themselves, deepening their respect for her, and sharing in her glory as the gay women have traditionally shared in their husbands'.

For men, the challenges of the modern relationship have never been more daunting. But this sounds far those willing to compete according to the new rules have never been more gratifying: the propensity of a successful family, the richness of an erotic life with a sexually assertive mate, the opportunity for greater intimacy and involvement with one's children. Perhaps the most significant finding of the Great Study's Harvard grads was that the most accomplished men typically enjoyed long and satisfying relationships with their spouses; great success had not been won at the expense of poor marriages and neglected children. Facing this challenge, working our risk, and channeling their natural aggression into business, sports, and community affairs, they proved today at work and in love.

The aspiring alpha male at the millennium would be wise to consider them.

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FLY AND THE JOURNEY
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THERE'S MORE TO EXPLORE IN BLACK.
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On a brilliant afternoon in the Chihuahuan Desert, a few miles west of El Paso, Border Patrol agent Cory Rodgers questions three suspected illegal aliens. Rodgers detained the group and later sent them back to Juarez, a process he expects to repeat as often as three times a day.

border war

Light-years from the majestic halls where immigration policy is decreed, lawmen, desperadoes, smugglers, cowboys, hookers, and other real people still wake up every morning in the Wild West. A monthlong adventure on the great divide. By John Taylor. Photographs by Antonin Kratochvil.



F WERE ONLY EARLY APRIL AND NOT yet endowering, but out in the Chihuahuan Desert, five miles west of El Paso, the sun already generated a fierce white heat. I rolled down my sleeves and congealed myself for bringing a horse. In front of me, Joe Gonzales, the head of one of the Border Patrol's mounted units, was steadily dressed. "Let's move," he said, then led his horse into a trot. I did the same, and we rode out across a mesa toward the border to hunt for illegal aliens.

Gonzales is a portly, affable man, and when the horses slowed, he turned in the saddle to explain that his mission that morning was to "set for signs," to know in a direction perpendicular to the flow of illegals, a strategy that would enable him to detect any recent movement. The border along the mesa was defined only by a rusted barbed-wire fence and a red dirt road that ran parallel to it. At a place where the wire had been pulled apart, Gonzales noticed some tracks. "They're old," he said. "You can tell new signs because it shines. The dirt crystals reflect more light, since they've been scattered in different directions and the wind hasn't blown them all straight. It's like when you rub sev-

A Border Patrol agent on an all-terrain vehicle with fat, diamond-tire drive-up. He was wearing a white helmet and swamp-warped sunglasses. He and Gonzales discussed different shoe tracks. Border Patrol agents carry a sheet of paper with twenty-seven different types of shoe prints, including cowboy-boot pointed toe, cowboy-boot rounded toe, sidewall huarache, tread huarache, plate with nail, plate with stitching, wire mesh, bad shot, waffle, chevron, Vibram, wavy line, and so on. The agent on the ATV said he and his partner had been picking up a track that he called sunburst, and he asked Gonzales to be on the lookout for it. Then he gunned his vehicle in a circle, spraying red dust, and took off.

We walked the horses along the top of the mesa, descended the steep off-hill—the horses leaping up and in as they stampeded unerringly downhill—and came out in a dusty basin covered with mesquite and creosote. Across the border,



life on the far left, across from bottom right: Crossing on the hand-drawn ferry at Los Ebanos, where the author almost drowned; young boys in sandals on the Texas side in Del Rio; a Border Patrol agent "setting for signs" at dusk in El Paso; under the brush for cover, a man crosses a river into Douglas, Arizona, the hot spot on the border this year.



Gonzales said, gesturing with his hat, is Anapra, a burgeoning oilfield, or shantytown, where a gang known as Anapra Thirteen preys on illegal immigrants, robbing, raping, and killing them. The Southern Pacific railway cuts across the basin a mere thirty yards from the border, and the gang regularly plunders its boxcars. "If we see them—and we come across guys carrying refrigerators, couches, stereos—they'll run across the border and give us the finger. Or throw rocks. Or shoot at us. Nothing we can do. The Mexican police say it's not their problem, because the crime occurred on our side."

We crossed the tracks and rode upon a mounted agent named Corey Hodges. He had a blond mustache and a leonine manner, and he chewed tobacco, leaving over his horse to spit. He had seen some illegals lurking just over the border and suggested we "hush up" and wait for them to make their move. We sat the horses back in the canyons. The temperature exceeded 100 degrees. Flies swarmed. The saddles creaked. The horses tried to graze on the cactus's core leaves. The agents' walkie-talkies spluttered with fragments of dialogue.

"That's over. There they are! Let's go!" Corey suddenly shouted. He spurred his horse into a gallop. I didn't see what he had seen, but I lashed my horse with the reins and it broke into a gallop as well. The chase was genuinely exhilarating—pure thrill. I leaped over the horse's neck, which plunged with each stride. Its hooves thudded on the desert floor. It veered around brush and skipped across rats. The wind puffed at my hair—the horse brum flapped back, just as in the winters—and then it flew off.

Corey clattered across a rock-strewn gulch and pulled his horse up at a mesquite bush. When I reached him, he had cornered a Mexican couple. He nudged it so headquarter-style, and, to prevent the couple from bolting, pulled his horse

Locs in the Chihuahuan sun
of several thousand bars at
Refugio in Nuevo Laredo,
prostitutes wait for the
tourists to begin.



in a prancing saddleback and forth in front of them. Joe Gómez had captured us and led the man and woman. "They're Chicanos," he said. "They live in the mountains to the south. Sometimes the whole tribe comes up here to beg. They go to Walgreen's, to Safeway, to the intersections."

"They don't want to move here," I asked.

"Nah."

The couple continued to crouch in the shade of the mesquite bush. The man, who was shirt and hand-clad, had on a red running shirt. The woman carried a plastic Pepsi bottle full of water. Both of them, squatting before the mounted agent, were glistening. I had expected them to be frightened or indignant, but they acted as if their own bad luck caused them, as if being caught was a minor setback in a diverting game they had plenty of time to play.

I asked the man where he was from:

"Refugio."

"Why had he come against?"

"To visit my brother."

A Chevy Suburban in Border Patrol-green bounded toward us across the desert, trailing a cone of dust. When it arrived, the illegals agreedly signed a voluntary departure order, meaning they would simply be driven back to the border and set free. As they climbed into the back of the Suburban, I asked the man when he would try to cross again.

He shrugged. "Maaaa," he said.

WILD WEST THE MEXICAN BORDERS ARE THE MOST MILITARIZED regions in this country. The Immigration and Naturalization Service, the Border Patrol, the DEA, local constabularies, the Texas Rangers, the FBI and the National Guard all patrol it in various ways, using, in addition to horses and ATVs, and a Harleys, twenty-one-speed mountain bicycles, Blackhawk helicopters, tethered reconnaissance balloons, Lockheed P-3s, Comanche, Chinook helicopters equipped with forty-million-dollar-per-light searchlights, sonic sensors, video monitors, infrared night, and image-enhancing binoculars.

But this awesome array is employed in what is, for the most part, an elaborate charade. Though the INS last year apprehended 1.2 million illegal aliens along the U.S.-Mexican border (6 million to 3 million got through without being caught), the vast majority of them were Mexican citizens, so the Border Patrol simply returned them to the border and let them go. There is something genuinely absurd—albeit comic, horrific, and pointless—about chasing down illegal aliens only to release them and immediately repeat the process. But, like all true absurdities, this exercise merely represents the logical extreme of a reasonable premise. We chase



Breaking the international bridge at Del Rio, Texas, a makeshift for an illegal-immigrant camp.



British immigrant (right)
at Refugio bar in Nuevo
Laredo, Mexico. He
only drinks for fifty miles.



Agent George Roopas (right)
and a partner patrol the
desert near El Paso.

down and release illegal aliens because we have no choice. We can't actually control the 1,200 miles of Mexican-American border, but we have to pretend we can, because if we let the rest of the world begin to think we can't, the means of illegal immigration would become a flood.

The problem, of course, is that the border is really just a legal proposition. In nominal sense, it created unity as far back as 1848, when it's a defining at the Texas Constitutional Convention about whether to grant ethnic Mexicans the right to vote, the representative from Harris County argued, "Merely they will come among us.... Tex, country, shiny, shiny, forty, fifty thousand way come to here and yougash you at the ballot box, though you are invincible in arms. This is no talk dream, no bughouse. It is the truth."

Silently they will come.... One hundred and fifty-one years later, the first person, Hyacinth and Indigeneous again began to subdue border shenanigans a decade ago, when the Simpson-Mazzoli immigration-reform bill was first proposed and the North American Free Trade Agreement began to be debated seriously. Since then, the border has emerged not just as a reference point for trade and immigration issues but as a battleground in the culture war. During that year's Republican primaries, former Tennessee governor Lamar Alexander proposed defending the border with an extremely new branch of the military. Pat Buchanan suggested erecting a Great Wall to sever it, and Bob Dole round it with the sort of ideological grimness a trip to the Berlin Wall would have warranted thirty years ago.

But the politicization of the border has obscured it as a place. Who lives there? Why? How does the presence of the immigrant bar shape their lives? To get a sense of what life along the border is really like, I spent twenty-seven days traveling from Brownsville, Texas, to San Diego. I stuck to back roads. I talked to illegal aliens, prostitutes, ranchers, park rangers, river guides. I asked everyone I met what the border means to them. The border is artificial, they told me. And the border divides, but it also unites, the border as a police state, the border as an opportunity, the border as a separate country. Who was very little to do with either Mexico or the U.S. My favorite response—the one that seemed the most accurate and vivid—came from Border Patrol agent Joe Gómez, who told me, "The border is the one place where the Wild West still lives."

CROSSING THE DEFINING DILEMMA OF THE WILD WEST was the struggle for control of the land. Immigration and annexation reform represent a continuation of that struggle. Neglected in the current immigration debate is just how long that struggle has gone on and just how tenacious and beefy American control of the border region has been.

The Spanish that needed the sea line in the 16th century, living on pasture, or land-grant ranches, the boundaries of which often sprawl out on both sides of the Rio Grande. For the 400 years before the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, which established the current border, El Paso was an entirely Mexican city. When Ameri-

town didn't begin to appear in the west in significant numbers until the early twentieth century, when improved irrigation led to an influx of midwestern farmers. Coffey's response called this movement "the largest migration of human beings that has ever taken place since history began to be recorded." The wave of white emigrants provoked the widely forgotten insurrections that began in 1915, a series of armed uprisings suppressed by the Texas Rangers that resulted in the deaths of 100 Anglos and as many as 5,000 ethnic Mexicans.

I have got a feeling for the border region's complex history of ownership and allegiance when I stopped at Los Ebanos, a small village along the Rio Grande seventy miles west of Brownsville. I had gone to Los Ebanos to cross the river on the hand-pulled ferry still in service there. When I arrived later one afternoon, the landing was deserted, and the iron-hulled ferry was pulled up on the bank. **NO TRANSPORTATION AFTER 4 P.M.** read a small iron sign.

I was leaning against the hood of my car, wondering what to do, when a pickup pulled into the adjacent field. A man in a straw cowboy hat and grease-splattered jeans got out. He introduced himself as Aaron Rivers. He said he owned the property around the landing. He assumed I was waiting for someone to cross illegally. It didn't bother him. "Everybody crosses here," he said. "More people have come to the United States through here than through Ellis Island. I've seen all kinds of people cross—English, Swiss, Chinese. We should put up a man statue of Liberty here."

His family, he went on, had owned land on both sides of the river for almost two centuries. For most of that time,

he kept myself in line with the ferry rope that spanned the river.

"When I came ashore on the Mexican side, the girl was delighted. She had large, dark eyes and seemed to be about twelve. 'Nietanamenco!' she shouted again.

"'Werhak!'" I said. We both laughed.

After a couple of minutes, I started back, but I soon realized my strength was flagging. I hadn't rowed long enough. Although I continued trying to swim upstream, I was gradually being pulled downstream. The ferry rope passed over my head. Those quarters of the way across, I was swept into the rippling eddy I had noticed below the launch. It was, I discovered, a countercurrent, a place where a depth change in the river caused in the incoming water while at the same time forcing downstream water backwash in on top of it.

I left myself sinking. I thought for a second that it was simply exhausted, but then I realized that the countercurrent was pulling me under. It was as if I had been snatched to my last. The flow of water bubbled noisily in my ears. The sun danced wildly on the green river. I had to fight to keep my head above water. My breath stopped and my forearm cramped. I was sinking but making no headway.

I was going to drown right in front of the girl in the white T-shirt. There is nothing as pathetic, as ridiculous, as unlikely to provoke sympathy in a desperate panic. I lashed out and, using the last of my strength, I thrashed through the water to the bank and, whining, grasped at the muddy tree roots.

I WAS GOING TO DROWN RIGHT IN FRONT OF THE LITTLE GIRL IN THE WHITE T-SHIRT.

Rivers crossed back and forth casually. The family had some land in the twenties, Aaron said, when an Anglo land speculator murdered Aaron's grandfather and claimed the property for himself. Subdivision through inheritance had reduced the parcel further. His land is now too small to farm, so he works as a registered nurse. But it remains important to him.

"I built a Jenny downstream with a backhoe, and I go fishing," he said. "I back my pickup down there, drop the saddle, raise an umbrella, and put out a line. The Border Patrol comes by and hassles me. They think I'm working for drugs. I say, 'Fuck off, that is my land!'"

When Aaron left, I walked down to the river. It was only about seventy-five yards wide at that point, lined on both banks with ash, hackberry, and black-willow trees. The water, chalky green from the west Texas limestone and spangled by the late-sunrise sun, moved slowly but steadily. I could see the sliding ripple of an eddy just below the ferry. A girl in a white T-shirt splashed on the far bank. She waved when she saw me and called, "Nietanamenco!"

As I looked out over the Rio Grande, I was suddenly seized with the urge to swim across it. I somehow seemed destined to the entire enterprise. The riverbank was steep and muddy, and the river, when I dove in, was cold but not too cold. The current was stronger than I had expected, but I struck out and, by swimming upstream, was able to

After a moment, I pulled myself over. I could taste river salt. My shirt was bussed, and I had a blinding headache—but I was alive. This was all that mattered at the moment. The metaphorical implications of nearly drowning solids awaiting the Rio Grande come in the days ahead.

THE BUST THE NEXT DAY, I DROVE THROUGH THE cotton fields of the Rio Grande Valley—April is harvest season, and trade spills cotton bimble past—and into Starr County, where the land begins to rise and the flat alluvial soil given way to dry creek beds and loose rock. Prickly-pear cacti appeared along the roadside, sprouting heads abandoned two yards and behind convenience stores. A gritty wind seemed to blow continuously. Shredded plastic bags fluttered against hurricane fences. Starr County is the second-poorest county in the nation. An air of futility, of men and women trying and failing to secure a purchase on life, is almost palpable.

But Starr County is not without its neonian riches. Amid its general architecture of dilapidation—behind the molding supply warehouse, even next to the city dump—sit implant-like speckled new mansions. They have manicured roofs and mulched windows, sunlit dining rooms, crown moldings, and swimming pools and decks adorned with Victorian gas lamps. They are owned by people who have embraced the notion that for those who [continued on page 132]

**MEN ARE FROM EARTH.
WOMEN ARE FROM EARTH.**
END OF STORY.

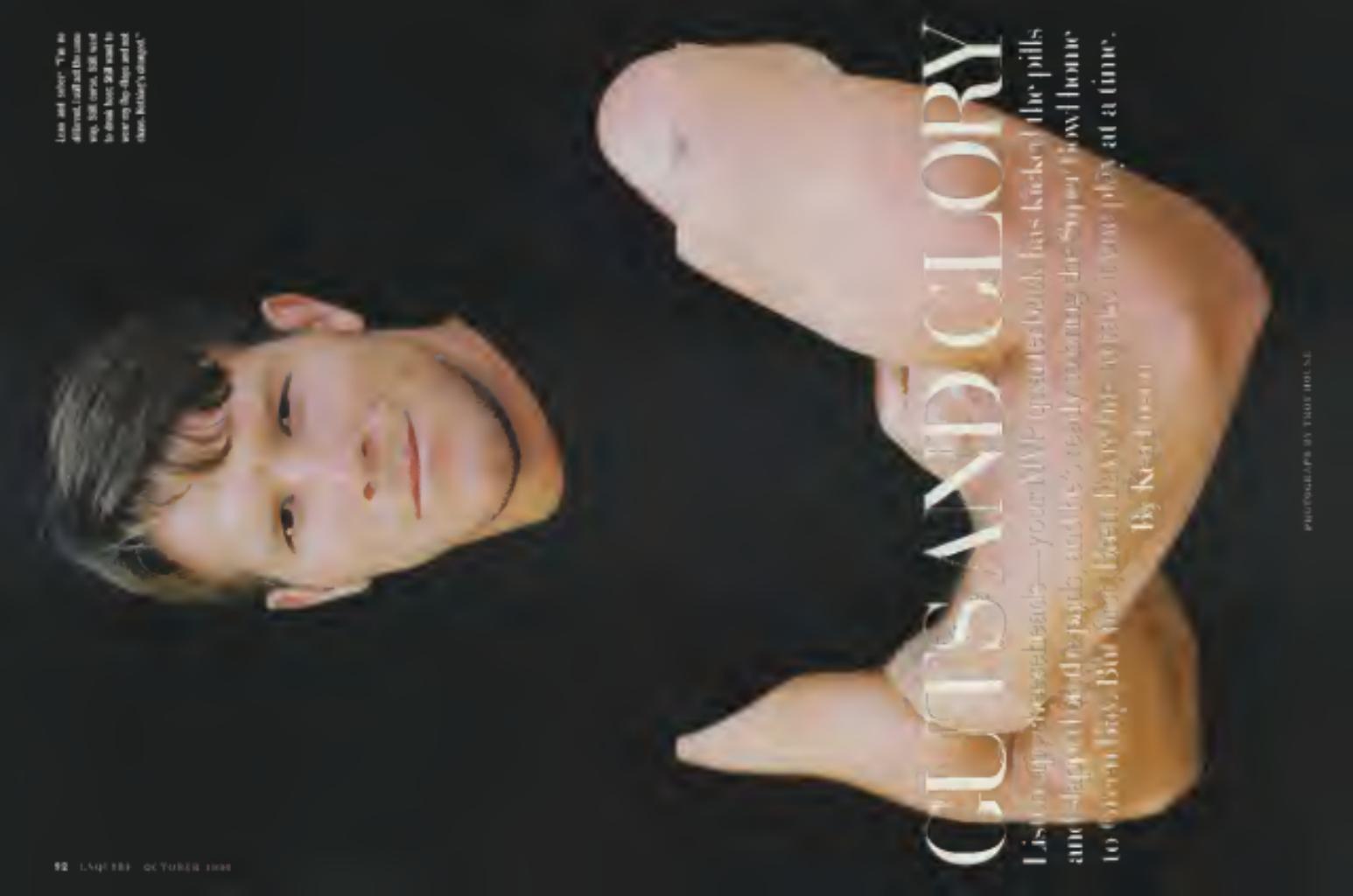


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JOHNNIE WALKER



RED LABEL



Lane said before: "We're different, I used to be a come-up, still come, still want to drink beer; still want to wear tattered jeans and not have brother's damaged."

GLUTEN AND CLOUT

Listen up, wheatheads—your M&P (quintessential has kicked) the pills and (skipped) addle park and the *2* ready-making the Super Bowl home to one day. But first, here's how to tackle it one day at a time.

By KATHLEEN



The best pack: Favre may not know the golf course with Cheesy, left, and Porky, but on the field each Sunday he's all business.

Favre on the back! (A top-ten seller for NFL Suspensions) They couldn't even pronounce your name four years ago (Broz Fawf! No, Favre, rhymes with corral), but they need you now. Baseball's dead, you can't really bet on boxing and basketball saves its best seats for Jack and Woody and JPK Jr. (Flyers and franchises move around more than military wives). Owned Cleveland Browns season tickets? Tough pal bought a Shaq Orlando Magic jersey? Sorry, loser. The only thing you can count on is that the Packers will play football in Green Bay just as they have since 1919. The fans own the team. Nobody's moving them unless they load the whole east town, too.

So let's go, lad. Conjur! 'Till then about the pills you popped until a gal, well, out of hand, and how you had a seizure that scared your daughter, and how you went to a maximum center in the middle of Kansas, and how the NFL took away your alcohol—your Miller Lite!—for two years. Get well, as the therapists say. Heal until the sore goes. You know what's next: Favre will put you in the studio, under that soft halo light. Maybe you and Sweetness can trade recovery stories. (Step Favre was a stud, pal.) They'll call it "MVP: My Victoria Secret and her John Test to write the score.

"I want to sound off.

"To everyone else, what happened to me was a big deal," he told me two days after that press conference. "To me, it wasn't. I'm no different. I will sit the same way Bell does. Still want to drink beer. Still want to wear my flip-flops and not shave. Nothing's changed."

But the counselors...

"I fought with them every day. I mean, I put a hole in the wall because I was ready to leave I told them, 'Look, I'm ready to hang up your shirt. You don't know me!'"

Grab your jacks. The lad's come to play.

"You succeedin', kid?"

"I'm human," lad.

Nothing like a pinch of fiscal to get the jacs flowing. Best Favre spits and dashes a golf shot. This is the first week in May, the heart of the NFL off-season, and Favre and Mark Charron, the Packers' All-Pro tight end, square in some golf following their morning workout in Green Bay.

At the first tee, Charron—Cheesy—rears an index

finger against his nose, bends over, and blows a smokeshot. "That's nice, lad," Favre says.

Just cutting loose, what's wrong with that? Earlier, Favre used to dispatch Cheesy in the clubhouse—it's one of his favorite pastimes—but Cheesy was steady. You've got to watch Favre. He'll wait until you're in the staff, peed on the toilet, then drop a bucket of ice water on your head.

How can you get mad? His laughter is too infectious. Look at him—tan, six two, the brown hair finger-combed. Ide Timothy Hunter's in *Ordinary People*, the face covered with an Amishapple mumble, not for effect but because he'd rather not shave, the sideburns raised. Shh. Na Na Na like Luke Perry, the wristbrace off. J. Crew shorts, T-shirts, and flip-flops, the voice deep with a Mississippi Gulf Coast twang that could kill Bloody Thacher than whitewashing a fence. He's having fun.

It's the same way when he finds a touchdown pass. He's no Cool Hand Luke like Montana, no Robo C.J. like Andre, no Golden Archer Top like Bradshaw. Favre's a jazz artist, all improv, impossible to watch, because one way or another—five TDs or five INTs—he's going to blow the house down. He dives into the end zone for a touchdown with the clock running out and a playoff berth on the line. He scamper to his left and bounces the ball across his body to the right for a funny-kind-winning touchdown. He goes back to pass, trips, gets up, and in one motion fires a completion. He plays football the way fine line to think they would play football.

He's fearless. In the final regular-season game last year, on a frozen field (what else?) in Green Bay, two Pittsburgh Steelers creased a Favre pass. He broke a blood vessel in his esophagus and staggered to the sideline.

"Favre's bleeding," a trainer said. Packer head coach Mike Holmgren:

"Okay, how much is he bleeding?"

Favre returned for the next play and threw a touchdown to Cheesy. Cheesy now smiles a purr.

"You can't hole, lad," Favre says.

This is the life. This is what you do when you're twenty-seven years old, make \$10 million a year, and can throw seventy yards on a line. People will pay you for a helicore with your autograph on it. Doctors invite you to mingle with stars. Women and amazing things. Here comes the photograph of that lady wearing only a cowboy hat and boots, carrying spread-eagled in a chair? Life is just gillin' and gookin' and... whatever the hell you want!

They were in Phoenix a couple of years ago, Favre and Cheesy. Didn't have a game, wanted to play some golf, so they just wore "Golfin'" and "gookin'"—see a tennis parlor. What the hell. Favre drew the gavel—the Supermax logo. Now he and Cheesy have matching Supermax tattoos.

Too bad Porky wasn't there. Porky is center Fresh Whiners, Favre's roommate during training camp and road games. "My hands are under Fresh's butt a hundred times a day," Favre says. "I have a unique job and so does he."

The Three Amigos—Favre, Cheesy, and Kud. They're give-with-the-gives, guys, as in, "We just don't give a shit," Favre says. They work hard, play every game—Favre has started many-one straight, the longest active streak among NFL quarterbacks. "The way we've always looked at it," Cheesy says, "take your three best guys, and we'll take us three, and we'll whip your ass in a fight."

Reverend's quarterback? Growing up in Kosciusko, Mississippi, Favre dreamed of playing for the Dallas Cowboys. They are now his greatest nemesis.

What a life—dormant on spring break, Animal House in shoulder pads, just golfin' and gookin', lookin' and fannin'—oh, yes, Favre can turn the quarterback. This man runs into a Fiesta Bowl at the Texas State Fair. He had so much gas at the drug-treatment center that a staff member took him aside. "Boss, there's still we can give you for that."

He's now, really, nearly. Tell him a joke, he'll reappropriate by asking if you've heard of the new book *Yellow States on the Wall* by L.P. French. Seven-gradebook material? But there's such a punny about him that you laugh right along.

Later that Packers-Raiders game in Green Bay. Cold enough to freeze faces. Favre calls a timeout to consult with Holmgren. He goes to the sidelines and bursts out laughing.

"What?" Holmgren says. "What?"

"Miller, you've got a frozen shield of snot all over your year mannae."

BACK ON THE NINE-HOLE COURSE, FAVRE HITS A PUTT ON the last hole to beat Cheesy by a stroke. "Nice shot, lad," Favre says. During the next round, the popular pack is front of him—why not, they so men slow! After four holes, he had a enough.

This personality change is surprisingly abrupt, but others have seen it before—he's wife, Deanna, their daughter, Brittan, seven, his parents, even Porky and Cheesy. They were worried about him, especially Deanna.

"I was cleaning out the closet," she says in their home in Green Bay. "I found a bunch of little packs kind of rolled up in there. A week later, they'd all be gone. I'd think, Jeez, that's a lot of pure pyle. So I started asking him, and he got real defensive. I just kept asking still like that."



GEAR YOUR JOCK, KID, THERE'S COME to play. First question, right out of the choices they went with it: Who you are? This is it, one chance to ask Favre. Favre about his addictions, his prescription pain pills, then everyone will return to what matters most: bringing a Super Bowl championship to Green Bay for the first time in twenty-nine years. ESPN and these local stations are carrying that naga press conference live—and they're putting. They want stars! They want connection! They want Oprah! Favre, it, look, they want your sexy Cagan ass down on the floor, begging America for salvation!

They'll forgive, too, in a heartbeat they will. Forget the Packer fans. You own them. You throw thirty-eight touchdown passes in a season, the cheeseheads won't care if you stiff give in the huddle. But you're national now, lad. You're the Most Valuable Player in the National Football League. You're the star quarterback on the last hometown team in America. You're the hero who will play the Dallas-NFC-Pepsi-Fiesta Fiat Cowboys and bring the Lombardi Trophy home to its rightful place on Lambeau Avenue in the town Vince Lombardi made famous.

See them standing outside? Those sweaty guys with the drowsy doofus grins the ones wearing the authentic 1949-50 green jerseys with the number 4 on the front and

Superman had found his kryptonite. Viscots, a narcotics distributor that parks more punch than cocaine. Homeless' bosses, doctors call it, but it's also a fixture of NFL players. You get the hell beat out of you week after week, you need something to keep playing.

Brett Favre kept playing, whatever it took, despite a first-degree separated shoulder (by Philadelphia, 1993), a deep thigh bruise (by Tampa Bay, 1993), a hernia (from 1994 season), a concussion (by Pittsburgh, 1995 pre-season), and a sprained ankle that swelled to the size of a grapefruit (by Minnesota, 1997). Each time, he either led the Packers to a win or came back and played game the next week.

"Last year, he was always stressed out," Deanna says. "He wanted to make sure he didn't lose what he had. He always worried: 'I got to do it. I got to do it.' It's constant."

The pills changed him. He stayed up all night, fatigued, anxious, couldn't seem to sit still. Deanna remembers the fits. "He was very mean—'Don't talk to me, don't look at me.' I couldn't say anything. We didn't communicate at all."

Every time she discovered a new stash, Deanna threw some away hoping Brett wouldn't notice, but a doctor's visits kept finding more. Where were they coming from? Other players, certainly. "They try to take care of each other," she says. That's certainly what former Packer John Jarrico told the author of the book *Return to Glory*: "If my quarterback comes to me and says, 'Hey, tighten me up,' it's a no brainer. You give him the Viso."

Deanna couldn't live like that. She told Brett he had to stop. If he didn't, she would move—away from Green Bay, away from Brett and the pills—and she would take Brittany.

"Everybody thinks Brett's so tough, but they haven't met me yet."

In February, as he was recovering from ankle surgery at a hospital in Green Bay, Brett suffered a seizure. Deanna yelled at the nurse to make sure he didn't swallow his tongue.

"God, I mean, we were in shock. Brittany just kept saying, 'Is my daddy going to die? Is my daddy going to die?' It was really scary for both of us."

Three months later, Brett was on television, reading a statement: "Throughout the last couple of years, in playing with pain and injury and suffering numerous surgeries, I possibly became dependent on medication."

The next day, at 3:00 AM, he was on a private plane, headed to the Menninger Clinic, a psychiatric hospital in Topeka, Kansas, that helps addicts. He looked scared.

He looked like he gave a shit.

THE LIFE HAD BECOME UNMANAGABLE

He had been at the Menninger Clinic, what, a month? and the bards would let him leave. They refused to let him go to the Packers' June minicamp. He told them what he thought, all right. Punched a hole in the wall just in case they insisted the point.

But they put the hammer down. They wouldn't even let him go home for the very first Brett Favre Celebrity Golf Tournament. You're not my MVP here, they told him.

Yeah, well, the very first day, somebody behind the break counter at the clinic asked for his autograph. He wrote it on a memo line. Molt wrote.

The counselors kept talking about denial. He wasn't denying anything. He had a problem, sure, but he'd be quit taking the Viso on his own, in February, after the seizure? Hadn't he agreed to enter the NFL substance-abuse

program? To do what the NFL-approved doctors told him so he wouldn't be suspended for three games?

So that's how he got to Menninger. He didn't know what to expect, but he had his own room, a television, and access to a kitchen. The other patients were nice, not the gutter brutes he had expected. "Fortunately, my problem never got as bad as everyone else's. A couple of the therapists I met with there were not even sure that it was a problem yet."

He never used pills on game day. He thought people should know that. He used them during the week, when his body hurt so much he could hardly walk. Yes, he asked other players for pills, but it wasn't as if he was running the locker room, begging like a jester. This wasn't the Cowboys' Michael Irvin getting stoned in a hotel room with cocaine.

The therapists disagreed. An addiction is an addiction. Recovery requires constant vigilance. Addicts have a disease. "Some of it is trick," Favre says, "but most of what they said went in one ear and out the other."

There was good point. He needed a vacation. It gave him time to think about the people he had hurt. He wanted to be better to Deanna and Brittany. That Brittany. Such a smart lad. Look at the way she sees him: "Daddy, I love you very much and loved how you played football! The most of all, I love how your heart is kind, gentle, and loving."

Once they let him out of here, that would be it. If he gets back into status, he'll take pain medication less often than that Viso. They can talk about having rock bottom, but he never did. He'd show them.

Brett Favre spent forty-five days at the Menninger Clinic before he was released. The average patient stays twenty. "If we can all forget about this, that would be terrific," he said upon leaving. "Because I have."

It was time to head home, to "the kill."

HE WAS BORN STEPHEN WHEN BRETT WAS little, he wouldn't drink water from anyone's cup or eat from anyone's plate or share a bathroom with his brothers.

Big Irvin was stepmom, too. Irvin Tamm—Big Irv, Brett calls his father—taught football for twenty-four seasons at Horace North Central High School, near the Mississippi Gulf Coast. Smart and solid, with a statos, Big Irv looks so fit he could crack walnuts on his forehead.

"Stepmoms can get you into trouble," Big Irv says. "Stepmoms can get you out of trouble, too."

They knew something was wrong, all of them. "You know your kid," Deanna Favre says. They had heard enough from Deanna to know Brett was taking a lot of pain pills. He told them he could handle it.

He always had. You never saw a kid with such willpower. Every night, before bed, he'd do push-ups. Every day he'd run the half-mile from the Favre house to the stadium road. He had plans. He had dreams.

That a kid could grow up outside Kiln, Mississippi, and aspire to a career harder than auto salvage is remarkable. Locals call it the Kill, presumably because "the Dead and Decomposed" has so many syllables. The Kill is, essentially, a cartoon fight surrounded by a few businesses. There is no town park, no grid of streets, nothing that would suggest a community—just red clay roads that snake off into the vegetation. If there were a welcome sign, it would say, come on in. We dare you.



Big Irv and Bonita live so close to Hattie B's you can fish for bass from their deck. Brett's a seventy-eight-year-old grandmother, Mrs. Mae-Mae, lives in the wicker room to their left. Kay-Kay, lost in the house next to her, is it's a nonstop family reunion, a twenty-four-hour open house, always somebody ready to boil shrimp and ice some beer.

When Brett met Deanna, she was in sixth grade, he in ninth. He asked her what her favorite football team was. The Cowboys, of course. His, too. Cool. They talked on the telephone all night, then described how he would play for the Cowboys someday. She believed every word of it. She was a good woman, too. If Brett needed someone to play catch, she was there.

"Don't see it as doing her," Big Irvin yelled one time as Brett was fixing footballs.

"Why?" he shouldered back. "She's cancer," он.

When Brett went to Southern Mississippi University, Deanna followed. When she got pregnant and had Brittany, she agreed that they were too young to get married. When he started as quarterback in the third game of his freshman year,

TERMINATES WERE CRYING. IT WAS UNBELIEVABLE.

Southern Miss won, 27-24. Sometimes Brett's mother wonders if that's when it started, the pain and her son's willingness to do whatever it took to find those child bumpers again.

ROTTING GAME EAST HE GOT THE LAST FOOTBALL SCHOLARSHIP Southern Mississippi had to offer only because another player snarfed one. In a big game, his sophomore year, his first pass was picked off by Deion Sanders—Prime Time was at Florida State then—and returned for a touch-down. That Abrams game? "Play, play, I drop back to throw, and I get hit right in the balls," Favre says.

He was Brett Favre, the shockbusting QB. He liked the image. Party all night, play ball all day. It's a football archetype that's hard to destroy. Layton. Look at the Packers. Didn't Matt McGloin get two touchdown passes in Super Bowl II despite a hangover?

Favre was drafted in the second round by the Atlanta Falcons. Prime Time was there and gave him the nickname Country Time, but it could just as easily have been Miller

The Kill fields: "I can go hard and no one could care less. I get called a stick chick just like everyone else."

she clowned for him. When he nearly died in a car wreck before the start of his senior year, she was there.

That was July 1990. Favre was a mile from home when he hit some loose gravel, lost control of his car, and flipped three times, higher than in a NASCAR highlight video. His brother Sean, following behind, dashed the car's windshield with a golf club and pulled him out. Brett was a mess—a fractured vertebra, a severe concussion, ribs, and bruised. He was barely conscious in his hospital room when he heard a TV announcer: Will Brett Favre ever play football again? He awoke to himself: You're damn right I will.

A month later, doctors removed thirty inches of dead skin from him. A month after that—four weeks—Favre ran onto Legion Field in Birmingham. He was thirty-five pounds lighter, his uniform sagged, and even the eighty thousand Alabama fans cheered his courage.

"I had chill bumps ready to break out of my skin. That's the greatest feeling. I went out there and I told the guys, 'Look, we're getting ready to play Alabama's ass.' They're looking at me. She's falling off me. My uniform doesn't fit me. My

testicles were crying. It was unbelievable."

Southern Miss won, 27-24. Sometimes Brett's mother wonders if that's when it started, the pain and her son's willingness to do whatever it took to find those child bumpers again.

Time Favre compiled more bar tabs than precast maps in Atlanta. When he was fined \$10,000 for missing a team photo, he told head coach Jerry Glanville he had been delayed by a car wreck. "You are a car wreck," Glanville replied. "Who gave a shit? He wasn't going to play anyway."

So the Packer cheerleaders howled in fury when the Green Bay general manager named a first-round draft pick for Favre, the good-time Charlie, who had thrown exactly five passes in the NFL, with a completion percentage of .000.

Favre was smart enough to know he wasn't going to play in Green Bay, either. The starting quarterback was for favorite Don Majkowski, the "Magic Man." Favre would hold a clipboard. The hand went to the third game, when Majkowski was injured. With seconds left, Favre threw a thirty-five-yard touchdown pass and the Packers won by a point. Poof! The Magic Man was gone. Favre had started every game since.

There would be no more anonymous漫游 for the Three Amigos; no more road trips for a little cutting loose. Not when you lead the Packers to four straight winning seasons and three consecutive playoffs, not when you come within a quarter of beating the Dallas Cowboys and playing in the Super Bowl, not when you return glowy to a team that had gone 42-30-3 since Lombardi left.

Now every time you go to Lambeau Field, an anxiograph has formed, that arms outstretched, their results split like baby bodies awaiting, awaiting, "Best! Best! Best! Please, Please!" Now if you ever appear in public, there is always somebody waiting to "suck you off."

That's what the Three Amigos call it, the constant Ohmgod, it's you, you're the greatest football player who we had! Don't get them wrong—they love Green Bay, think that the fans are the best in the world, but it's tough to stay immune to the Give-a-Shit Club when somebody's slathering on you.

"That's why I love to go back home," Favre says. "It's all people who don't give a shit. It keeps me sane. I can go back, and no one could care less. It's like, hey, you're just one of us. I just called a stuck dick part like they call everyone else."

Just another stuck dick who cared as little as he occasionally hypoventilated during college games. Who got so pumped during the NFC championship game last year he threw a couple of early passes ten feet over the receiver's head. Who is legend now that the Packers hasn't renegotiated his contract to that of a full-year怒 the other top QBs get? Who wonders why he doesn't get the endorsement contracts other NFL stars do? Who took pain pills rather than risk using one a game and letting some other lad sit his job?

Favre has a childlike faith in his own ability and a childlike fear that it can all be taken away. "Nobody knows how hard it is to get to the top and how hard it is to stay on top. Now that I've done, it doesn't make it any easier."

As a matter of fact, it can get damn complicated. The Miller Time reputation was always exaggerated—well, mostly exaggerated—but the NFL doctors told Favre he couldn't drink alcohol for two years as part of his treatment plan. Porky and Chewy say they'll drink Cokes with their postgame pizzas, which Favre calls a nice but unnecessary gesture. He'll keep alcohol in his house.

"We're still going to have good times," Favre says. "As long as I'm in this program, I can't drink. That could be two weeks, it could be two years. I don't know. I'll tell you what—if we had some pretty good times. They're not over with. I can promise you that."

There's one good dive in particular that Favre dreams of now. He wants another date with Poise Time. Someday, he says, the Packers are finally going to beat the Cowboys—they've lost seven straight—and go to the Super Bowl.

"We know we'll win a Super Bowl, we really do," Favre says. "I think it's going to be this year. It's close."

THURSDAY, JULY 1996

I saw a man with a Packer logo stitched into his pantsleeve. I heard a woman implore her son, "Be aggressive" before dispatching them for autographs. I saw a man leading through Lambeau's football entrance. I saw a woman grab Haggie White's hand and shout, "Thank you so much for being a Christian in Wisconsin!" ("You're welcome," the Minister of Defense said.) I found forty-two businesses in the Green Bay yellow pages with the word Packer in their name. I saw four thousand people wedged against the perimeter gate for the opening of training camp at 5:30 on a Sunday morning. I heard them cheer wildly when Favre completed his first training camp pass to a receiver who was not being covered.

Favre didn't even notice them; he was disinterested. Deanna had called that morning with terrible news—Deanna's brother Scott was in a car wreck. He would be fine, but Mark Hauer, one of Favre's best friends, was injured. "I didn't need to hear that," Favre says. An only Jesus is how to play with pain.

He was still looking forward to training camp. For the summer behind him prove everyone wrong. "I think this year is going to be excellent," Deanna says. "We got my old Brett back."

The Packers have moved into a bigger, more remote house in Green Bay. She says there is so much calmness now. He has a foundation to help charities. He spends more time with his family and would like three more kids. He's married. Back in May, when everyone was wondering how best to disclose Favre's drug treatment, Brittany interrupted with a question: "When are you going to ask Mommy to marry you?"

On July 14, sixteen days after he left the Manning Center, six days before training camp opened, Brett Favre married Deanna Byrne at St. Agnes Catholic Church in Green Bay. They had been dating for twelve years.

"She has been there every single time I needed her," Favre says. "Somebody wondered why I didn't sign a postscript. You know what, also all the shit Deanna's had to go through with me, she's entitled to half of everything."

He's still drinking. He's still out himself leading the last hometown team in America on the field for Super Bowl XXXI. He will be sold on January 6 in the Louisiana Superdome in New Orleans, less than an hour from Ronces. Everyone will be watching the quarterback with his hands parked under Porky's ass, the one with the Superman manbo under his shoulder pad, the one who acts as if sterility can be found once play at a time.

But if he hasn't grown up, he has at least wised up. Brett Favre knows he can look in the stands and find the sulking woman with black hair and green eyes, the one who fell asleep on the phone while listening to him spin his diatribe when he was a boy. He knows he can find the smirking little girl who likes *Love Lucy*, *Goosebumps* books, and sitting on her dad's back when he does his mighty pushups. When the game is over, when he takes off his helmet, when the fans have stopped cheering, Deanna and Brittany will be there.

They give a shit, lad.

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In the Driver's Seat on Fifth Avenue

Visit the General Motors showroom on Fifth Avenue during October for the automaker's fall fashion exhibit by Robert Isabell. In conjunction with GM's sponsorship of 7th on Sixth, New York's premier fashion event, the exhibit will support Cosmetic Care. This fund-raising effort to combat breast cancer features one-of-a-kind cars styled by such designers as Richard Tyler, Todd Oldham, Anna Sui, Mark Eisen, and Nicole Miller. These cars will be unveiled during women's fashion week, October 28–November 2, in the GM showroom.

Esquire Style Agenda

THE AUCTION

Since that unlucky day in Dallas, JFK's life had been a little sedentary. The time had come to get his golf clubs back. Fiction by Robert Olen Butler

WHEN WE TURNED onto Seventy-second Street and saw what awaited us, my handler flushed, and he tightened his grip on the wheel. I suspect he wanted to accelerate on by and about the whole place. But he knew the Director had stayed in and he looked at me.

"Are you sure, Mr. President?" he said.

The only thing you could see of Sotheby's was a white awning. The front of the building had completely disappeared behind television trucks and satellite dishes. It was a risk, of course, that things that Jackie and I had lived with were disappearing into the hands of strangers, and it made me feel as if I were dead. The CIA could get me in only on this third day and I knew well enough already that the \$4,000 I'd been able to escape earlier from my nation of pocket money probably wouldn't allow me to buy back even a teacup. But there were other things working on me. I had to go.

We passed an NHK satellite truck, heading to Tokyo and then a BBC truck, and I said to my handler, "Let every station know whether it wishes us well or ill, that we shall pay any price."

"Mr. President?" he said, pressing me to prove I wasn't rambling. He was a very young man.

"You probably never even read my lastgood address," I said.

He was reaching for his cellular phone.

"These, you don't have to call. I'm just having a little joke. It's all right. The Director and I talked it over. There's no better place to hide than the glare."

One pulled his hand back to the steering wheel. "Ten more," he said.

"That's okay, those. In case of domestic instruction the President has contingency plans to go to a safe house in Arlington, Virginia."

His hand went for the phone again.

"Call out, those. That was President Johnson's plan. Old news. I said that on purpose as a joke."

"I respectfully request that you don't joke like that, Mr. President."

My handler's right to be nervous. After all, loose talk is

why I'm in the position of having to sneak into the public auction of the effects of my late wife. It's why my long-suffering Jackie was led to love,皱纹, as a bigamist, the wife of a Greek who had a face that could stop a thousand ships.

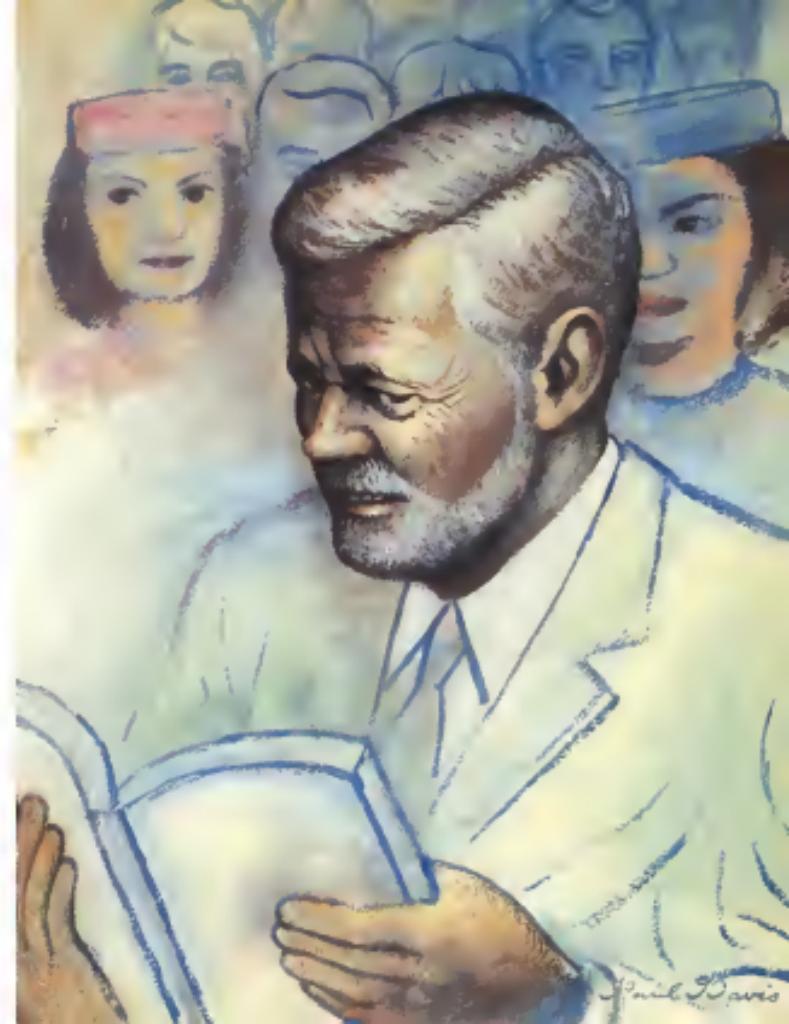
The bullet fired on that fatal afternoon, in Dallas killed only the editor in my brain. After that moment, I could not hold my tongue about anything. I woke up on the night of the agency's bidding into the hospital and began in order to disclose all the state secrets of that very secretive case. Of no use now. But it's far too late to explain any of this to a world that the Agency disseminated quite quickly must never have even necessary access to me.

I completely agreed with the decision. It's only the editor that's gone. My powers in reason are still completely intact, and this was the only reasonable course. Any one who came near me would become a security risk. And if no report to the CIA had crucial to me, I would have talked endlessly to Jackie about the things that we agreed would never be spoken. Along with the secret details of our foreign policy, the needs and aigments of all the women I'd ever known would have ended up leaking out. There was no choice but to bury the wax dummy in my place. Not only is my reason unaffected, so are my powers to remember Soviet inventory. It's been the great comfort of my confinement.

Still, I'm very glad now to be sliding to a stop in front of this white awning. I know I can trust my consciousness to silence. I realize that it's still important. I say that what I know is of no use. But I suspect that if I were to speak now of the doomsday rocket silo twenty miles north-northeast of Burghfeld, Idaho, in the Gospel Hump Wilderness, I would be speaking of something still in place, though perhaps the target agenda of Moscow, Peking, Pyongyang, and Hanoi would have changed slightly. But I am determined to withhold even the faintest allusion to those things.

As I pointed out to the Director, I never asked to go to the funerals or the weddings. I didn't ask to go to Teddy when he left that girl in the dark water at Chappaquiddick or to my aaphose, who never even had a chance to know me, when it was clear to me that he needed to speak here early of what he'd done to that girl in Florida. I didn't even ask to go to John-John to warn him about the magazine business. But this auction was a different thing.

I step out of the car. I suspect the Director has watches



in the crowd. I am never out of sight. But for a moment I feel alive again. I feel that I am living in my body, in the present moment. How sweet that is. I've come to realize in these thirty-two years of exile: How often in the life I used to lead was I in a place that could have filled me with memories, but my mind carried me elsewhere. I missed the moment. Now, on the sidewalk in front of Sotheby's, I head to the end of a long line of people whose faces once would have caused me to smile, whose hands would have come out to touch me. It took me a long time to get used to that touching. I never quite did. But I know a now. They touch me now in my dreams. I am trembling. From time to time, I weep, weep with the fluids of desire. I touch them back, each one.

But here, the TV lights glare and the crowd files up and they seem to touch only the things I touched. I think that is similar to what Abraham Lincoln dreamed the week before he was killed. He dreamed that he awoke from a deep sleep and heard distant sobbing. He awoke and made his way through the empty hallways of the White House to the East Room, where he found a great catalogue draped in black. A military guard stood there and Lincoln asked, "Who is dead?" The man replied, "It is the President." I could ask anyone now in this line, "Whose French silver-plated tooth-brush box with cover is this, being auctioned off as souvenirs?" And the reply would be, "It is the President."

I PASS ALL THESE HANDS STUFFED IN POCKETS OR CLUTCHING purses or fidgeting in conversation. I pass all these men turned away from this bearded man with close-cropped hair and the fine line of a scar on the side of his skull and the hobbles of a very bad back. And I know I should be glad that there is not the tiniest flicker of recognition. The Director and I are in complete agreement. He's stuck his neck out for me. Pay for an old man and his pain. Trust that old age has slowed my tongue, which has, I confess, but part of me is ready to sit, at the slightest glance. From a strange, how Mayor Richard Daley found fourteen thousand votes in the cemeteries of Chicago to merge a state and elect a president. And I would point out the side of gratitude the whole planet over these dead voters. None of us knew at the time of the man's death of the fact that the Soviet general in charge of troops in Cuba was accustomed to use nuclear weapons. After the Soviet Union broke up, the general appeared on TV—*I got all the cable channels*—and he said if the American President had chosen to send troops to the island, they would have been nuked. If Richard Nixon had been the President, he certainly would have sent those troops. What does that mean? It means those dead Georgians prevented a nuclear holocaust. My impulse to talk about these things aside, credit should be given to this recognition of American heroes.

But no stranger gives me a glance. I go to the end of the line and my back is hurting, but out here in public, the pain reassures me somehow. A woman up ahead in the line turns her face tilly toward me. She has the color of the old Red Grange model football we used to wear in High school. I make love, on the concentrated chair in my Senate office, to a woman who was all bone and freedom and teeth, and her thick hair was the same color, a rose color, and she sat on my lap and brushed her hair around me. She has spent time with me often these past years, in my memory. And that woman has blue eyes, just like me and that her attention passes on. She is perhaps thirty-five. In my memory I am thirty-five, but this woman before me

now sees only as old man. But I am still sitting on that concentrated chair and the leather squeaks beneath me and I'm sweating and smelling the woman's hair and I tell her about my color, the color of a Red Grange football, and she laughs. The woman in line laughs now. She is with someone near her, but I don't look to see who it is. I watch her face dilate sweetly in laughter and if she were standing next to me, I know I would speak to her of that other woman, whose name I can't remember and whose eyes I can't remember, though I've often tried in these years of exile. I would like to remember her eyes, because remembering those other things as vividly as I do makes me feel as if the mystery of her eyes should be there, too, but I got past that and then sold off or given away and it was a big mistake. It was a back.

I went my Harvard crew cuff links back, too. I'm thinking of them as I finally make it through the front door of Sotheby's and a young Negro woman in a uniform holds her hand to help me through the metal detector. I would not call her a Negro to her face—I know the language has changed—but I am still a creature of my time and Marion called herself that. I will always remember where I was on the day Marion was shot. I was in the little stone-walled garden in the cottage in the compound in Virginia. I was about to launch a putt across the fifteen-foot green whose one hole has pulled me in at ten thousand times a year for all these years. I was just aligning the head of my putter—I want my old putter back, too, by the way, though it's sure to show a small formats—it was just aligning the head of my putter when whatever side it was supposed to me at that time—I don't remember him except that he was young—stepped out of the back door and he said, "Mr. President" with a rap in his throat and I knew that it was something terrible. Poor Marion. How nice it would have been if only his editor had been shot away and they thought to bring him to us. We could have add each other so many things we never had sense enough to talk about when we were living our public lives. And Bobby, too. We three could live together and I'd talk with Marion and I'd wrestle my little brother to the ground—even with my back—and with his editor shot off Bobby could tell me what he really thinks of me and that would do him good.

So this young Negro woman reaches out to the old man, she seen in front of her, an old man having trouble straightening up, having just gone up some steps with a very bad back, and her hand reaches out beneath my forearm. And though there are two shadows between us and her flesh, I thrill at her touch. I straighten up, not wanting her to be touching the arm of a stooping old man, and there must be pain but I don't feel it. She looks me in the eyes, just before I step through, and I think there is some flicker of recognition there.

"Do you know me?" I ask.

"No, sir," she says.

I realize I'm on the verge of telling her about the perfect for me, we'd hand to kill. Fidel Castro is 1959. Fidel Castro. I don't know why I think she'll be interested in that. But I know I'm not supposed to say anything. So I step through the arch of the metal detector, and the machine says out as if it had seen a ghost. The woman who touched my arm is beside me and I'm ready to confess.

But before I can speak, she says, "Do you have anything metal, sir?" and I understand.

I tap the side of my head, on the right ridge of scar tissue, and I say, "Metal plate. From service for my country." I

think she can hear the ring of it before my knowledge.

"I'm sorry, sir," she says, and I'm hoping she will reach up to touch the place herself. But her hand goes to my arm again and urges me toward a desk. "Thank you," she says. "Show your registration slip over there."

I move away from her and there is still a ringing in my head and at the desk they give me my bidding card, and from the push of people behind me I'm giving up more steps, made of stone, and my back is hurting again and I'm growing older by the moment, though I can still feel her touch on my arm.

The Director has not been very good in recognizing my name as a rate. I've always understood the risks. There weren't very many women with the highest Agency clearance who were prepared to open themselves to me. One or two over the years. And there was always a drive to show my tongue, because even the highest clearance is still bound right by the need to know test. I presume the rest of me was slowed as well by the drug, certainly my awareness was, for I remember those women only very faintly. I wish there had been another way, a safer way, a fully conscious way, for me to feel the touch of a woman. But I did not ask what more they could do for me. I only asked what I could do for my country.

The room is very long and I straighten toward the front, but the rows of padded beige chairs are filled more than halfway back already. I look around and I straighten again, this time with clear pain, but a pain put aside. I see Jackie down the row. She has yet sat down. She has a pillow a part and that stiff headrest hands. But I know myself that she couldn't be that young. And she's dead. I look again. Her eyes—she is smooching her pink dress and looking around the room—her eyes are Asian. Her hair fine and bended and I follow it and coming down the aisle is another Jackie, a Caucasian one, dressed in rose blue, unaware still of her rival.

I sit. I am on the aisle and breathing heavily. I suspect there are several of me in the room as well, though I hope not to catch even a brief sight of them. I can't help but look up, and the second Jackie, with a slightly longer bended, walks up at the bottom, brushes past me. Her face turns and her eyes fill and the looks straight at me. She doesn't show any sign at all of sorrow who I am. As far as the her eyes are much too close together and her mouth is too thin. I'm briefly disappointed that she doesn't recognize me. I look away and I close my eyes. Jackie has been with me, all these years.

When John and Caroline were sleeping in the afternoon, I'd clear half an hour in the afternoons of sole and tell my staff to leave us alone, and Jackie and I would make love in the room when they all made love, the presidents of the United States. And I'd ask her to talk to me about art while we touched. I wanted her mind in this art, and her voice,

I TAP THE SIDE OF MY HEAD, ON THE RIDGE OF SCAR TISSUE: "METAL PLATE. FROM SERVICE FOR MY COUNTRY."

breathily as a student. I've been shaved over and over in the books. Brothers was way out of line telling those things about our Sister. So for days I thought I'd talk to her about women with hair—they have always talked mostly about women with each other. And it's true that my mind was often elsewhere when I touched the women who always seemed to be there, open to me. But not because I didn't value them. Not because they were objects to use, taken up and cast off even more easily than the objects for sale in this crowded room. There were suddenly too many things in my head at once. This happens sometimes. The voice of a woman now: "New bidder on my right at one thousand." I don't know what it is that's for sale but I have only four thousand and I clutch inside, a little desperate for a reason. I can't quite understand Jackie would me asked above me, as I lay delicately still, trying not to let my back damage me. She would turn into a column of sunlight from the window and her skin was dusky and her voice was soft and she would be wearing a single strand of pearls, the only thing left on her body, and she would speak of the geometry of Arctic power in the tenth century A.D. and the bands of decoration were drawn in black on cream-colored day and there would be mandorla and chevrons and monograms and then, gradually, as the tenth century was past and the eighth began, there was an advent of animal forms. She spoke of all these wonderful vessels, the amphora with its two great handles and the lower with its belly and wide mouth and the skinny leopards for pouring. Jackie would throw her head back and her mind would make my mouth catch and now the eighth century was, was in full flower, with lions and chariots and battle scenes crowding these clay pots, and some of men and women, leaving the dead, and her eyes would wear up even as we touched and she fell forward and I put my hands on her back and felt her bones.

"No, ma'am, it's not your bid?" A long, sweetly hand-some face, a Boston sort of face, to my eye, is floating over the lectern at the front of the room, rolling out numbers. "It's at a hundred and ten on the phone. Now a hundred and twenty in the front. You, madam, now it's at two, a hundred and thirty. A hundred and thirty thousand dollars. A hundred and forty at the back of the room." I look away from her and I think for a moment that a man be a Grecian statue for sale, something I'd always hoped Chios would buy for her but that she would never speak of with him, but on a TV screen to the side of the room I see a triple strand of pearls. A hundred and forty and now fifty and now sixty and I squeeze my eyes shut. Jackie crosses the White House bedrolls to me, her clothes shoves behind her and the pearls right at her throat, and they make her ridiculous stretching to me, as if no woman has ever been this naked before, and a taken the curtain, the failed covering of the thin string of pearls, to show me this.

The room has gone into ap-
taste. I look up. And the second
Jackie, her eyes too close together but
much larger, very dark, is looking at
me. She is in the aisle seat directly
across from me and she is looking at
me intensely.

"Now let number 484," the
woman in the front says.

This Jackie in blue won't look
away. She knows she's known.

"A single strand simulated-pearl
necklace and our chips."

I drag my attention away from
the simulated Jackie's gaze and on the
TV screen is the necklace my wife
wears in my memory of our leveraging.
Perhaps not that, very one. Perhaps
some other necklace. She was a
single strand of pearls at our wedding,
too. When Jackie wore pearls, I felt
her nakedness always, even beneath
her clothes. I stare at this necklace on
the television screen and it could well
be the pearls of any of a hundred
memories I've taken out and handled
on countless nights of what has been
my life. I feel myself rise up slightly, hardly from my chair I
hold back my hands, which want to lift to the screen, to this
image of her pearls. I want these pearls very badly.

"The opening bid is ten thousand dollars," the woman
with the long face says.

I cry out. My cry is an anguish, but there are twenty
crash at the same moment and they are all saying, "Ten
thousand?" "No no one does." Except perhaps the Jackie
across the aisle. This necklace is beyond my reach already.
All the fragments of my life in this place are beyond my
reach. I look to the right and she is fixed on me, this
thin-lipped face. First lady. Her mouth moves.

I stand up. I turn. I drop my bidding card and push my
heavy leg forward, the pain in my back starting at each step.
Twenty thousand. Thirty. The bidders' hands fly up, fishing
their cards, the dollars pressing up at the aisle. Forty thousand.
Fifty from the front row. I touch her chest, at the hollow of her throat just below the pearls. Jackie
is now up straight, naked naked on the center of me, and I
lift my hand and put my fingers on the hollow of her
throat. And I am out the main door of the auction room,
breaking through a hedge of reporters who pay no attention
to me. I stop, my chest heaving and the pain spreading all
through me, and I look over my shoulder and just before
the reporters close back up, I am for her. She's coming toward me.
The Jackie in blue has run and is following.

The bodies of witnesses intervene but I know she
will soon be here. Now I wish for the Director's men. I want their
hands to take my elbows and I want them to whisper, This way. Mr. President, and I want them to carry me away back
to the empty gallery and a patch of sunlight when I can just
sit and sort out the strings thing going on inside me. But I
am on my own, it seems. The most someone can believe me, but
there are more reporters that way and the faux Jackie will
catch me just as fast for them.

I turn blindly to the right. I go along a corridor, my face

I LOVE JACKIE. I KNOW BECAUSE INSIDE ME I HAVE HER HANDS AND HER HAIR AND HER NIPPLES AND HER TOES.

"Good," I say, struggling with my voice, which wants to
speak much more.

Then she says, "We've seen all your moves."

There is a stopping in me.

"The Organ of Wealth is my favorite."

"Thank you," I say. "Hurry back to the auction now.
You may buy some of Jackie's pearls."

She sits her head in the memory of my advice:
I am away from her, move myself down the steps.

"Yes," she calls after me. "I will."

I am out the side entrance now, on York Avenue. It is
quieter here. No one looks at me. I am a ghost again. I turn
and walk away, I don't know in what direction.

But that I do know. I love Jackie. I know because in
side me I have her hands and her hair and her nipples and her
toes and her body elbows and knees and her shoes and her
belts and scarves and her shadow and her laugh and her
manners and her simulated pearl necklace and her yellow
gypsys bangle bracelets and her Gorham silver heart-shaped
candy dish and her silver plated salt and pepper shakers.
And somebody has my golf clubs. And somebody has my
cigarette holder. And somebody has my Harvard-class cuff
links. And somebody has a single strand of Jackie's pearls, a
strand that I also have. And who is about all these things
of a person that won't fade away? The things you seek out
over and over and you look at intently and you touch you
touch with your own hands. Or you touch with the same
movement of your mind in the long and solitary night.
Such things these are signs of love. In a world where we
don't know how to stay close to each other, we try to stay
close to these things. In a world where death comes unex-
pected and reminds us at the ultimate act of forgetting, we
try to remember so that we can overcome death. And so
we go forth together in love and in peace and in deep love,
my fellow Americans, Jackie and I and all of you. And you
have my undying thanks.

lowered, trying to disappear, and an-
other antennae is before me, a modest
one, translucent, a small hand. My
hand goes out to it. I take one step
down and her voice is in my ear.

"Please," she says.

I stop.

"Recognized you," she says.

I turn to her.

"But I didn't mean to drive you
away."

Her eyes are very beautiful. The
brown of them like the earth in the
deepest hole you could dig for your-
self. Like a place to bury yourself and
sleep forever, is like the brown of
Jackie's eyes. I want to tell her se-
crets. About myself. About muscle
aids. About anything. All the secrets
I know.

"I thought I read somewhere you
were dead," she says.

She sounds strangely intense to
me, but there is something about her
eyes now a little unfocused. And she
is dressed as my wife, who is dead.

"I didn't believe it," she says.

"Good," I say, struggling with my voice, which wants to
speak much more.

Then she says, "We've seen all your moves."

There is a stopping in me.

"The Organ of Wealth is my favorite."

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toes and her body elbows and knees and her shoes and her
belts and scarves and her shadow and her laugh and her
manners and her simulated pearl necklace and her yellow
gypsys bangle bracelets and her Gorham silver heart-shaped
candy dish and her silver plated salt and pepper shakers.
And somebody has my golf clubs. And somebody has my
cigarette holder. And somebody has a single strand of Jackie's pearls, a
strand that I also have. And who is about all these things
of a person that won't fade away? The things you seek out
over and over and you look at intently and you touch you
touch with your own hands. Or you touch with the same
movement of your mind in the long and solitary night.
Such things these are signs of love. In a world where we
don't know how to stay close to each other, we try to stay
close to these things. In a world where death comes unex-
pected and reminds us at the ultimate act of forgetting, we
try to remember so that we can overcome death. And so
we go forth together in love and in peace and in deep love,
my fellow Americans, Jackie and I and all of you. And you
have my undying thanks.

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"There are those who smoke cigars for their equipment, and there are those who smoke to give the world the longer."
The Five C Club Acre Inst.

The men of the Five C Club believe in certain inalienable rights: life, liberty, and the pursuit of Havanas. Or maybe a good Dominican.

By David Blum

THE LONG CIGAR

Ask me five officers from left) Joe Massuccelli, Primo Iglesias, and Doug Robb. "The cigar has power," says Iglesias. "That's what you're getting when you smoke it."



on their porches at sunset, watching the blue smoke against the purple haze, hold their cigars up to the gods, and say to themselves, Now I am a man.

JOE MASSUCELLI IS NEITHER SOY NOR STERILE. He is of the opinion, however, that a cigar is both.

So are some men look right at home with a Cohiba in hand. It happens that Joe is not one of those men.

Which explains why, in a few hours—when tonight's Five C Club meeting begins—Joe's task as an officer of the club, which he has been since January, will not be to distribute, dig, or help light cigars. That responsibility will fall to Doug Robb, who takes great pride in his role and does a damn fine job, too. Joe's marching orders will be to collect the money, which is a hundred dollars from each of the guys, the guys for the Scotch, the vodka, the shrimp, the wine, the cigars, and the door prizes, too. If it doesn't, though, Doug usually kicks in a few twenties to make it all work out. Still, when you consider that the membership of the Five C Club now numbers close to two dozen, you're talking about a serious amount of cash. But when you look at Joe—that perfectly bald head and that friendly smile about the eyes—you don't mind handing him the dough.

The cigar adds something to Joe that isn't exactly visible to the naked eye. It gives him something smile. A little extra confidence, maybe. Something to discuss with women on dates. (He's thirty-four and single.) Something to relax him after a tough day, a tough week, a tough month. Something to connect him with guys who smoke.

Joe graduated from Syracuse University in 1968. He didn't make back then. Never did. Cigars, though, he had the occasional cigar, but he didn't know what he was doing. Not until Doug Robb invited him to the Big Smoke.

The Big Smoke is, depending on your perspective, either one of the most disarming events on the planet or a terrible way to find out about cigars. In 1969, the first Big Smoke took place at the Marriott Marquis in New York. It was—and remains—essentially a way for approximately two thousand cigar smokers to gather in a hotel ballroom for two and a half hours and get a huge handful of free cigars, small portions of complimentary beef and beans, and what is without a doubt the largest dose of secondhand smoke you can handle without an oxygen mask. Today there are ten Big Smokes a year around the country in cities like Washington, Chicago, and San Francisco, all sponsored by Cigar Aficionado Vegas is next.

Being the great pioneer that he is, Doug figured he'd

gather up some pals and buy a bunch of ego tickets for the Big Smoke in May of 1992 at the Marriott. Doug knew Joe from the job—Joe works at Citicorp Investments Services as a senior investment consultant—and asked him to go

Crash in, Joe and

Each guy got a nice lug and a book of thirty-five chips, each exchangeable for one cigar. For the first hour or so, the guys roamed the ballroom, collecting their booty, at each inimitable booth, representatives from the world's biggest and most reputable cigar makers—among them Arturo Fuente, Macanudo, La Unica, Davidoff, and Nat Sherman—sighly handed out their products. Along the sides of the ballroom, the guys occasionally stopped for a taste of beef or any place from several New York steakhouses, among them Ben's Bistro, the Oak Room and Bar at the Plaza Hotel, and a joint just opened in the Empire Hotel across from Lincoln Center by Mammafella, mogul John Kluge, called the West End Street Steakhouse.

Doug Robb is the Organizing Man. Being the first big master of the bunch, he'd had some time to consider a smoker's needs. That, it quickly became apparent that the

bigger need was somebody to smoke with. Why else would these Big Smokes be so damn successful? For when he got right down to it, there was something highly esoteric about the Big Smoke. They come around only once a year, they cost too much, you can't sit down, the room gets pretty oppressive after a while. ... So maybe, he thought, there could be a way for him and his pals to smoke together without visiting around.

A club? That would do it. Following a quick calculation, Doug figured that with his pals from Citicorp he could get enough guys together for a cigar club; they could get together once a month, and they wouldn't need the Big Smokes anymore, no, sir.

But a club needs a clubhouse, right?

The fellow from the stationery told Doug how they were going to have a private cigar club at West End. For says, you could join and use its private Cigar Room, a separate dining room is the back with superior ventilation and exclusive access. Only members could book the room, it had space for two dozen at least, and you could smoke cigars in it before dinner, during dinner—well might long if you feel like it.

What say we join the club? Doug asked his pals. Let's do it, agreed Joe Massuccelli and Frank Vass and all the rest of the guys.

And so, a few months later—this past January—the Five C Club was born. As an homage to the club's place of birth, the guys first considered calling themselves El Poder Grande, which is Spanish for the Big Smoke, but in the end they decided that might be a bit much.

Then again, the cigar has always enjoyed a bit of snob appeal, all the way back to its origins as an elite tobacco product sent back by North American explorers to Spain. With Sir Walter Raleigh promoting the idea of smoking, it wasn't hard for the European upper crust to see the appeal of these hand-rolled rustic ratings as early as the 1600s. Eventually, American colonists picked up the habit, and off it went. History has recorded U.S. presidents from John Quincy Adams to JFK to Bill Clinton as cigar smokers.

But no one has ever been more closely associated with the cigar than Sigfried Freud, King of All Mugs.

He is one of the great stories of all time. The father of psychoanalysis spent most of his days (and nights) smoking a product that bears a strong resemblance to the male sexual organ but failed to ever explain the connection. And while one would be hard-pressed to find the last in any of his writings, there's no doubt that the twenty-cig-a-day doctor must have had those famous words "Sometimes a cigar is just a cigar." But was that another groundbreaking psychoanalytic insight or just a lame excuse?

Freud smoked Cuban Churchill-sealed Cubans. Even Kennedy never allowed tense relations with the Soviets to interfere with his Hispanic habit. For most cigar smokers who could afford them, Cubans have always been the most coveted of cigars.

And yet there are those who believe that, like Castro himself, the Cuban cigar is no longer in its prime.

"Cuban cigars are better." That is a carefully considered view of Primo Iglesias, the thirty-three-year-old vice-president of the Five C Club, who still remembers the day his father got caught at Hanesuta customs in 1969 with Cuban

cigars under his shirt. Primo's dad always smoked cigars in Cuba and stayed with the habit in Florida.

But not Primo. For some reason, Primo preferred cigarettes. Maybe because they were American, Primo muses.

He embraced everything American, including capitalism as both a philosophy and a career. He used to work at Citicorp in 1991 and moved around to several branches, establishing himself as a keystone worker with a handle for management. Before long, Primo had the title of senior investment consultant, meaning he not only handled customer accounts but also supervised half a dozen other brokers from a branch in Queens, and he got to know Joe Massuccelli and Frank Vass, and, of course, who doesn't know the great Doug Robb?

Two years ago at a business dinner, Doug pulled out his cigar, held it out to Primo, and said, "I've been doing these for years. You want one?"

"Mmm, love one," Primo said to Doug. "My dad, he smoked 'em, but it's been a long time."

Doug loves cigars now. He smokes 'em every day.

"It's the power," Primo says. "The cigar has power—that's what you're gonna when you smoke it. When men accomplish something, they're always turned to cigars. You hold a cigar you look in a position of power. You look at movies, you look at magicians, you see the guy that's made it, he's smoking a cigar. That's what amazed me."

Primo stands at the door to the Cigar Room in the West End Street Steakhouse, an Arturo Fuente Hemingway Short Story in his left hand. It is 6 in the evening, and Primo comes by to greet Primo, then Joe, and then Doug. Each gets a firm handshake, a friendly smile, and a pull of smoke. This is Primo's club, this is his life. He looks around the room with an air of contentment.

"I love smoke," he says.

AT A FEW MINUTES PAST SEVEN, THE MEN OF THE FIVE C Club settle into their chairs. The tables have been arranged in a U, so that all the members face one another. After an amiable, seating arrangement has become somewhat fixed, the group has settled into tiny窃窃 and is happy to have done so. The group won't repeat an incident in March when a member's friend got drunk and started breaking unsmoked cigars in half. That particular gentleman will not be invited back, think you.

Doug Robb sits at the center, as is his wont. He wears for the occasion a simple pair of suspenders to go with his easy-pause chair. There would be no mistaking Doug for a sweater, no mistaking Doug on a pointed horse. This guy is built to block. As befits a man with suspenders and a cigar, Doug often finds himself pulling on the suspenders as he puffs. This further underscores Doug's image as the bon-

Freud, who smoked twenty a day, may have said, "A cigar is just a cigar." But was it an insight or a lame excuse?

leader of the Five C's, even his smoke clouds are the biggest.

Promo sits only a few chairs away, to Doug's left. His smooth charm dominates the club's conversation among those within earshot. He leans forward as he talks—directly into you—so that you feel warmly included in the glow.

Like Frank Vass, He has a few chairs away from Promo, and though he does his share of talking, he's not quite so garrulous; there's a brief let-up of reserve about him, not to mention a distractingly offbeat way of dressing for the meeting. Whereas all the other members were sittin in the dark, Frank goes for the spotlight look of the newly bachelored: a granite-brown Nehru-style collared shirt and a plaid-and-striped tie. He was the last to arrive last night, carrying a duffel as the bar half an hour before; he will, without a doubt, be the last one to leave.

Sean Wayne, a ruddy thirty-five-year-old Citicorpier, has chosen his customary seat next to his pal Jeffrey Soto, one of the few Five C members whose work has no connection to Cusco. They seem an unlikely pair, Jeff is a quiet, soft-spoken man who doesn't drink, while Sean's loquacious style seems more at home across the room, where the racous guys like to sit.

"I don't drink wine," Jeff says. "But I keep getting my sunglasses filled in case some wusses to drink it."

Sean smirks and pats him on the back. "He's my pal," Sean says. "I didn't even know this guy before, but every morning I'll sit next to him because we're...friends."

They share litigies, woes, philosophical

They find beauty in a man's hand. "It's somebody else packing your stools for you—saves you the work," says Jeff.

They see poetry in a T-bone. "It's two cuts in one," Sean says. "If you don't want the sinew, you get the file."

They yearn for happiness, wealth, success. They even wonder a little about fame. "It'd be pretty good, being famous," Sean says. "I don't think I'd mind being famous, wouldn't mind at all."

Elsewhere at the table, the talk is mostly of cigars. At one end, where Doug sits—next to his father, a retired cop, who's been coming to the meetings as a kind of honorary member since the beginning—each expert interlocutor about some species, circumference, and age is being digested along with beef. If these were not nearly men owing hours to their beef, a visitor might think he had stumbled into a charwoman's tasting with a bunch of cork sniffers.

"The wrapper is good, but the stems..."

"Oh, I know, it's fine."

"There's a hint of coffee in it, you know?"

"And smooth."

"Definitely smooth."

"I don't like 'em too earthy."

"Dominican filler?"

"Honduras."

"But you see...full."

"It's not a heavy smoke. It's a medium smoke."

"I like the leaves."

"You are the leaves."

"Anybody got a cigar stand? Mine's out."

"This baby don't have right."

"Maybe you let it wrong."

"Let it wrong? My son, I'm wrong."

"It's a little peppery."

"I had an Open X last week. Good. Not great."

"What'd you pay?"

"I paid too much. Shitton is too much, right?"

The smoke arrives, with scintillating plumes of mashed potato and a couple of huge onces leaves, and some Spanish, too, as the boys will get their vegetables. They eat quickly and heartily. The onces leaves take their position in proximity to Doug's spouse.

AFTER HUMMER, THE LAST ROUND OF COHIBA IS served.

This is the Long Cigar.

There is, of course, no meaning to a Long Cigar. Any cigar who assumes that the length of a cigar equals an exact corollary to the length of anything else in life is ridiculous. In fact, most aficionados prefer a short cigar, or a medium, for reasons of style and taste.

But there are times in a man's life when size matters.

Like Derry Harry marching for his 44 Magazines. Doug whips out a bundle of Long Cigars from his humidor, which he keeps near him at all times. As the supplier for the Five C's, Doug is responsible for revealing the appetites of each cigar to his friends. But this cigar needs no explanation. With a silent, knowing smile, Doug hands each of his friends a seven-inch Ave No. 3 from the Dominican Republic, an elegant smoke with the taste of morning, and a dry finish. And for several moments, the Five C Club members sit silent, then, after all, no simple task for any man to light up the Long Cigar.

It is now also a co. Cognac and coffee round out the evening, and both are necessary: the cognac for those who will soon be returning to their beds, the coffee for those who will be venturing on into the night, perhaps across town to Scores, the upscale sports nightclub on the East Side, where men can freely smoke and show off their Long Cigars.

It will be a month till the next meeting, so John Leland will have to wait to introduce a little piece of new business to the membership.

John knows a guy who's a Boston Catholic priest and a cigar aficionado. Now John knows he's not Holy to get the priest into the Five C's, but he was willing to loan about cigar because John likes to talk cigars with just about everybody. That's what Doug Robb taught him: You talk about cigars, you learn about cigars, you smoke cigars, it becomes, like, a hobby. And for John, who's twenty-six years old and the youngest member of the Five C's, there's a lot of time in his life for hobbies. He even used chewing tobacco for a while but eventually decided it was too disgusting.

Anyways, John wants to propose something to the Five C's. Nothing big, just a motion.

"It'd be great," he says. "You know, something to put on the calendar. I don't know, kind of like a philosophy or something."

The reason John wants to go with is that Commencement Ceremony.

"I got my prior friend to do it for me," John says. "It's Latin. It means, 'Together we drink, we dine, we smoke.' And when you get down to it, that's really what we do."

But nothing's official yet. Doug says if I'll have to wait till everybody gets a chance to vote on it in the next meeting. He's put it on the agenda under new business, which comes right between the smoke and the Long Cigar.



The Friday Scotch





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I'M TOO SEXY

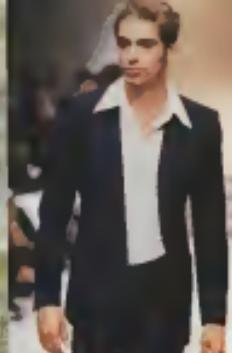
Pumped and pinstriped on the runways of Milan
By Woody Hochswender

WE USED TO LEAVE it to women to dress sexy, while men slipped on to their powerful camouflage of blue and gray. Women dressed to kill, men dressed to make a killing. But the latest developments in fashion seem to suggest a different breed of male and perhaps an inversion of roles. We've become the women. Or at least the leading fashion designers see us that way. And we're not talking wanton purple but well-molded men's wear. (See Armani, Versace, Valentino, Gucci, and Missoni.) In the most recent men's wear collections shown in Europe, jackets were fitted to the body and trousers almost skintight. The smooth shirt and the transparent top replaced the classic polo and the oxidized button-down—all the better to show off sculpted pectorals. Men today are in better shape than ever before, and these are certainly the styles to show it.

If anyone can get men interested in showing some skin, it is Terence Blanchard, the American designer behind the reinvocation of Gucci. His take on male sensuality includes sleekly tailored suits cut very close, with pinstripes, trousers and sheer shirts, sometimes

Clockwise from top left: Missoni's striped knit polo; Gucci's madder-stripe silk suit with a sheer shirt; Gucci's shirt with transparent panels; Valentino's body-hugging short-sleeved shirt.





From top left: Leather jacket by Alberto Biani; rapper Tupac Shakur modeling a velvet suit by Romeo Gigli; Italian striped suit with wide lapels by Gianni Versace; a tuxedo with trench coat by Giorgio Armani at his madison show.

Tupac also took a turn on the runway for Romeo Gigli in an old Alfonso Romeo factory, dressed in one of that designer's rich-hippie looks—a gold velvet suit—and was followed by a pair of hookend bodyguards looking like laundrymen in striped shirts and enormous berettes. (Shakur was later spotted again in Florence at the Giorgio Armani show, sipping champagne and wearing those gold watches—probably because he is wanted in three time zones.)

At Prada, a company that has moved way beyond the black-satin clothing inspired by its popular lep-

suks, everything seems designed to reflect the lopiness of absolute simplicity.

The men's collection now has micks of moss, bottle blue, gray hawser, and tan roses to go with the company's great waffle-pique sport shirts. There are also more than forty styles of shoes, including pump skin sandals, which are very cool.

With nautical muscle shirts a hot item in men's fashion, it is only fitting that Missoni is again having its day. Missoni based its newest men's collection on the sea, rippling blue-and-green horizontal stripes, like waves in the ocean, on fiscal pullovers, evoking the seafarers but somehow very tidy. Dolce & Gabbana, the Italian design team, also specializes in plongé, graphic-lace, lace, worn under a sharply tailored pinstripe suit, with seashells (for more on Dolce & Gabbana, see page 118.)

For the shamer in seductive sensuality, there is Gianni Versace, a Milan-based avant-garde collection, which featured suede bell-bottoms for men, cut long so they dragged on the floor, and tight, belted shirts. Even more extreme was Vivienne Westwood, the British designer, whose Milan show included eighteenth-century courtesans in exaggerated satin suits, sling-back heeled shoes, and bouffant hair. We especially enjoyed the women leather belts with butthole cutouts.

Armani collaborated with theater director Robert Wilson to produce a rock-and-roll fashion "spectacle" in an old Florentine subway station. The audience entered an indoor forest to the

The Men's Store

Calvin Klein
Collection



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urbane angels

We think of leather as being tough and edgy, the uniform of outlaws. But this fall's leathers are all about clean lines and a new sophistication, from a streamlined trench coat to a tailored shirt. Take a walk on the mild side.

Photographs by Troy Word, Produced by John Mather



Sidle-up leather jacket with tailored collar and leather trousers from Gilt; high-up leather boots by Hogan. Ring: Belk. Leather belt by John De Groot; shirt, by Armani. Tie, Gianni Versace. Magazine, *Die Zeit*. Photo by T. Mather, styled by L. Lohengrin

Top: Anna Kournikova; photo by
Cristiano Bittencourt; center: A
woman gets a massage at the
Dovee Spa; the spa is
by Jodi Sandler, inside Bittencourt's
Undercover; the Vagabond
is located in Grandola.





Decorative fabric: pink
by Condor. Dress: white
and pink silk by Dior. Hair
accessories: Yves Saint
Laurent. Shoes: Christian
Dior. Jewelry: Cartier. Glasses:
Cartier. Magazine: *Elle*.
Cup: vintage by R&W
and the English Club.
Dress: Dior.



4. *Leucanella* 1896.
Lichen-stick insect
but not having leather
feet. In Brazil, Argentina
Uruguay, and Brazil. Colon
Kun. The stick insects
for other purposes are
very rare.

DREAM TEAM
THIS YEAR MARKS
THE TENTH
ANNIVERSARY OF
ITALIAN DESIGN
TEAM DOLCE
& GABBANA'S
SENSATIONAL
CINEMATIC
STYLE, WHICH IS
HERE IN ACTOR
JARED LETO.
THE SECRET OF
THEIR SUCCESS IS
SIMPLE: THEY
MAKE WOMEN
LOOK SEXY
AND MEN LOOK
MASCULINE.
PHOTOGRAPHS BY
TROY HOUSE.
PRODUCED BY
JOHN MATTHEW.



Staged and directed by Dolce & Gabbana.



Left: Three-button herringbone wool suit, V-neck cashmere sweater, French-cuff cotton shirt, silk tie, plain-front wool trousers, and lace-up spike-toe leather dress. Center: Wool-and-leather cardigan and crewneck cotton pullover



Right: Cashmere coat, short-sleeved V-neck sweater, plain-front wool trousers, and lace-up cap-toe leather boots. All by Dolce & Gabbana





There's a look in the dancing of the movie *Requiem for a Dream* and the leading man tries to shake his character from another. He plays a 19-year-old junkie off his pedestal to make connections and to find identity down-and-out drugstore clerk Peter (Jared Leto) in the pangs of withdrawal from Milt's (Michael Pitt) "My So-Called Life." Leto, young man on the verge that he is, is wearing Dolce, the dress-up chain for young Hollywood. "See, this is stuff because I usually wear jeans and T-shirts." He looks down at himself in the reveal mirror. "Kingdom of the day." "Now I feel all grown-up." And why not, when with two movies due out in the next few months—*The Last of the High Kings*, a coming-of-age tale, and *Requiem*, that is Leto's latest, plays a surprised lead killer opposite Diane Sawyer. Time to shake the teen-dream image for more than one's own self. Give up all those dressing up? There is such thing as too grown up.



On screen last winter, this pair-and-leather-trimmed wool parka, plus-size wool-cape-trimmed and lace-trimmed leather hose, approximately Dolce & Gabbana. For store information see page 128.

border war

[continued from page 40] line along the border; the border itself is the greatest resource.

"We're the number one resource in this sector for narcotics," Rick Aguirre, the agent in charge of the Border Patrol station in Rio Grande City, the country seat, told me one morning during routine patrol in his Ford Bronco. "It's remote but you can't see the major roads. You can cross the river anywhere. I have eighty-eight miles of border to cover and thirty-five agents. It works out to about five agents in the field on any shift." Farley in Starr County is not confined to the post.

The frustration of law-enforcement officers like Aguirre is compounded by the widespread tolerance of smuggling along the border. As a result, he can't always rely on his colleagues in Hidalgo County, to the east of Starr; the sheriff was convicted in 1994 of selling forged visas to a jailed drug dealer. In Zapata County, to the west, the county judge was convicted that same year of allowing smugglers to use the county airport to off-load drugs. The sheriff of Frio County, above Big Bend National Park, was sentenced to life imprisonment in 1994 for smuggling twenty-four hundred pounds of cocaine across the river.

The Bronco's radio blared and popped Aguirre around it and then turned to me. "Want to go on a drug bust?"

As we hurtled down the highway, Aguirre told me that the Border Patrol had been called in to back up the local police, who had received a tip about a big drug cache. We turned into an unfinished housing development. Two men wearing black face masks and carrying automatic weapons stood outside a cinder block house.

In the garage, police officers were stacking small bags of marijuana against the rear wall. They had already brought out a dozen kilo bundles of cocaine, each wrapped in clear plastic and bound with yellow tape. Inside, the house was a shambles. Clothes were strewn across the floor. Handfuls of marijuana lay scattered in the halls, the rooms reeked of marijuana. An impulsive Hispanic man sat on a couch in the living room. He wore jeans and a sweatshirt; he had been taking a shower when the police arrived, so his hair was still wet and he had the scars of two bullet wounds on his abdomen.

This sort of heat was a routine, almost daily occurrence, Aguirre said. Meanwhile, he went on, who knew what else had come through? "It's like snaking a finger in the dice. You got a finger here, a finger there, but other holes are opening all the time. The dealers have walkie-talkies and cell phones. They know all our cast, the marked and the unmarked. When they're bringing a load over, they follow us—they know where we are, and they'll send some dealers over at decoys, and while we're rounding them up, they'll be bringing the dope across the river downstream."

SPANGLISH WHEN TEXAS SUCCEDED FROM MEXICO In 1836, both sides claimed the region between the Rio Grande and the Nueces River, which eventually became the Gulf of Mexico at Corpus Christi. Neither side really controlled the area—in 1835, a group of Mexicans tried to establish it as an independent state, the Republic of the Rio Grande, but the Mexican army suppressed them—and it still has the feel of contested territory.

The day after the drug bust, as I was crossing from Mexico into the United States a hundred miles south of Laredo, I picked up a hitchhiker. He was maybe twenty-five, gaunt and dusty dressed in grayish rags. As the

cabins agent stepped out of his booth, I told the hitchhiker I assumed he had a green card.

"Pedro," he said, "man, yo *so* *Americano*." He graduated a Texas driver's license.

The customs official studied our documents. When he looked at me—his work had shaped his features into a permanent expression of suspicion—he realized that on this stretch of the border, I was the one who provoked suspicion. After checking the truck, he doggedly waved us through.

"La migra no molesta," the hitchhiker said.

I'd been told that the people who live along the border are "afflicted in both languages." Instead of uttering either English or Spanish, some speak a sort of border patois that freely mixes the two.

"Fuckin' Spanglish, man," the hitchhiker said when I asked him about it. He gave me several examples. Customs officials were *los tipos*. There was *la pieza*, an *un poco*, an *una ojetina* in Spanglish, he explained, you would say *La jodida ojetina* and *la pieza*.

The hitchhiker said his wife and children were Mexican, that he had been born in the United States but lived in Mexico—his mother had crossed the border specifically to give birth in Texas—and that he was on his way down to McAllen to pick onions. That's what he did, he said, he picked fruit and vegetables—mostly fruit.

"Not a bad life, I guess," I said.

"Could be worse. You work outside, you work. Boss paid you ticks. I been in Virginia, Florida, California, Washington, Kentucky. It's not a bad life if you don't mind pickin' fuckin' fruit. You got to pick a lot of fuckin' fruit."

I was heading west and let him off on the road to Zapata. "That's fuckin' lingo," I said.

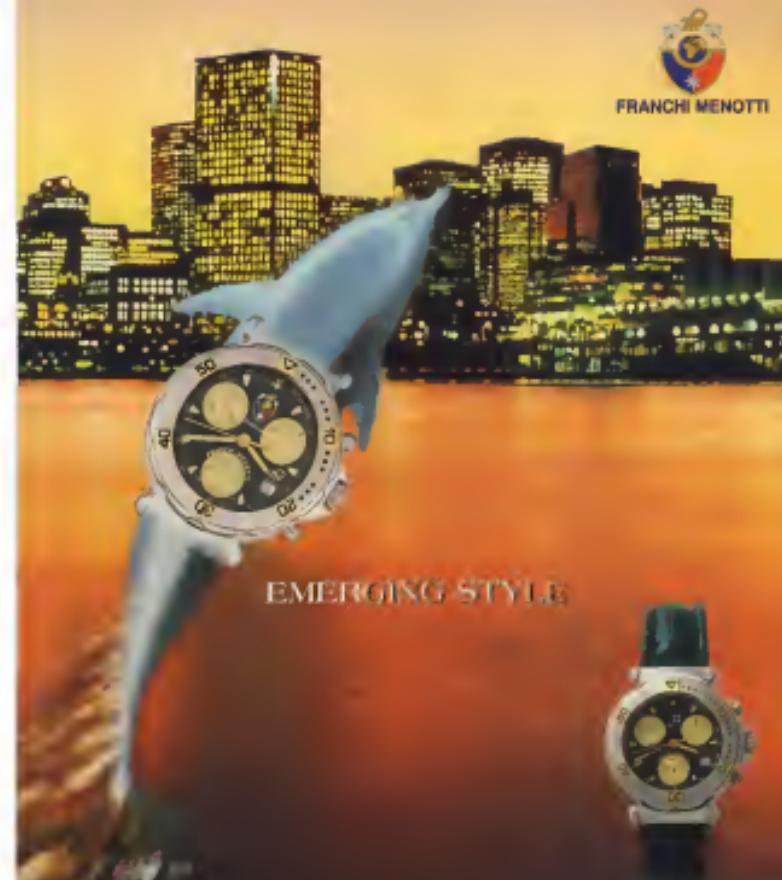
He shrieked with laughter, revealing brown, gapped teeth. "Ah basta, gringo."

BOYSTOWN LAREDO, SITTING ASTRADE I-35—THE longer highway between Monterrey and Dallas and thus the main land route from Mexico to the United States—is the quintessential border town. A NAFTA-driven boom has made it the second-fastest-growing city in the country; relatively speaking, real estate in Laredo is now more expensive than in New York.

Laredo represents the triumph of border entrepreneurship, which calls for selling on one side what is expensive, unaffordable, or illegal on the other. Mexicans cross into Laredo to eat at Dairy Queen and Church's Chicken and to buy Pampers and Levi's at places like the Mall del Norte. American tourists cross into Nuevo Laredo across the river to buy amphetamines, hammocks, and dry-fried tequila; to have dentures and prescriptions filled less expensively than at home; to open nail salons, or maternity clinics, where they pay Mexican women dollars to lay down a week to make everything from sweatshirts to automobile air bags, and to copulate freely [and cheaply] with prostitutes.

Indeed, if Laredo is the quintessential border town, then Boystown, a faded warehouse complex in Nuevo Laredo, is the quintessential expression of border economics. Every Mexican border town has a new-savvy, mid-light district, but in Laredo prostitution is such a large and diversified business that the prostitutes work in their own walled city.

"Half my fannies are to *Repentos*," Juan Valdez told me early one evening. Juan Valdez is a cabdriver. He had a



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"YOU WANT WOMAN?" JUAN ASKED ME. HE WINKED. IT WAS ALL RIGHT WITH HIM.

doctored braces and wore yellow malaysian cowboy boots, and when I approached him outside the Posada Hotel on St. Augustine Square and told him I wanted to visit Boytown, he gave me a roguish, conning smile and said, "You want women, huh?" I said I just wanted to see the place. He winked and added to reinforce that I didn't need to prove it, it was quite all right with him.

"All the gingers want to go to Boytown," Juan said as we crossed the international bridge. "It's the biggest tourist attraction in La Rioja. In hunting season—November, December—it is packed!" His English was good but heavily accented. *Esquisses sonnes*, often published.

We drove to the outskirts of town, past shiny monuments and along a white stucco wall with painted advertisements that had faded in the sun. Juan turned in at his gate and parked. Just inside was a small police station. Through a window, I could see two Mexican policemen reading newspapers. The police, Juan said, regulate Boytown. They keep order, collect fees from the bar owners and prostitutes, and try, or pretend to try, to keep underage girls from going into business. "Some guys want fifteen, fourteen, thirteen-year-olds. They can sometimes get them down by the bridge. The girls in Boytown have to be eighteen, as they say."

Juan and I walked down the rated, unpaved streets. The compound took up several blocks. Above the rows of bars were rooms where the prostitutes lived. Laundry hung on poles extending from windows. A woman sat on a laundry, stretching her legs. The whole place had the sense of confinement and sadness associated with a military barracks. Juan led me to a bar called Poco Gayo's. "This is the most expensive place," he said. "The girls have the best bodies." He半信半疑地 said that I wanted a woman.

Laredo is a popular B&B destination for oil-field roundtrippers, and three tables in Poco Gayo's were filled with huge sunburned Americans drinking beer and playing cards. None of them had taken off their hats. Their expressions were humorless, even grim, and they ignored the women, who lingered about in various states of undress and lame-duck.

When Juan and I took a table, a young woman in a seductively-shaped bikini sat down on my lap and stared me with the prostitute's boldly contemptuous eye. "Come on," she murmured. "We'll take a slow. I'll make you real hard." Real hard.

She had pretty almond-shaped eyes and a long, honey-jar. She had dyed her hair a shiny copper color. Her forehead, under the heavy makeup, the wore, was topped with a rash of tiny blisters.

"How much?" I asked.

"Thirty dollars for everything."

"What's that?"

"A fuck and a fuck."

I told her I was a journalist and offered to buy her a drink. She sighed but slid off my lap and took a chair. She said that her name was Senorita, that she was ranseur, that she worked Mondays through Thursdays from 4:00 P.M. to

2:00 A.M., averaging six customers a night, that on weekends she took the bus back to Misiones to be with her two young children, that she had no husband or boyfriend or pimp, that she paid the owner of Poco Gayo's five dollars for the room, one dollar for the condom, and one dollar for the towel, and that she made more money in one night as a prostitute than she would working for a month at a supermarket.

Two Americans in blue urban windbreakers—classic lunch-pail—appeared in the doorway. Their expressions were a complicated mix of shyness, lust, and suspicion. Seeing them, Senorita said, "You write your arse and you get paid, but you want me to talk without getting paid. Why should I?"

It was a good question. In the hypercapitalist culture of the border, all people are commodities, every encounter a transaction. Senorita rose, assumed her boldly contemptuous look again, and approached the two lunch-pail types from when they saw her, broke into a sly smile.

Later, Juan took me down a long block lined like the facade of a motel, with doors. Women leaned against the openings. "These girls here are only ten dollars," Juan said. He pointed to a tall young woman in a black fishnet blouse. "Look at that one. She's ours. Some of these ladies are real bad looking. At night, with the pants and everything, it's different."

We passed by a guy bar named the Dallas Cowboys. Three transvestites with hemmed hair sat outside, smoking. They leered and beckoned. Down the street, a bar featured a mannequin digressing a girlie mounting a woman. "That's just a joke," Juan said. "Man in a costume. But that is a real doozy! These live doozies and a woman. Bloody has a twenty-inch dick," Boytown snidely fleshed.

A stringy Anglo in a black cowboy hat and his girlfriend, a leathery blond, were walking down the street, perking into the various doorways and laughing. The women, whose laugh had the harsh quality of a crow call, seemed to be working extremely hard to give the impression that she found it all quite hilarious.

RANCHER TWO WEEKS INTO THE TRIP, I CROSSED THE RIO GRANDE five hundred miles above Brownsville. The trans-Pecos region is so remote, so barren—the mosquito here it started, the grass sparse, the soil aridized—that the border, as a cultural delineation seems to disappear. When that happens, when the border fuses, it becomes possible to glimpse what the land was like before it was drawn, as I was able to do when I spent the day with Jack Skiles.

Skiles, a rancher, lives on a bluff just above the confluence of the Pecos and the Rio Grande. He is a lean, weathered man with a soft voice and a courteous manner. No sooner had I arrived than he asked me if I wanted to see the cave paintings. Of course I did. He lifted his spring Labrador into the back of his white pickup, engaged the four-wheel drive, and took me down a perilously steep trail to the Rio Grande.

"SMART WETBACKS," SANCHEZ SAID, "DON'T PAY TILL COYOTE TAKES THEM."

We parked at the river's edge and walked through a grove of salt cedar and up a sided out creek bed into Eagle Nest Canyon. Its winding limestone walls, weathered to the colors of tallow and rust, rose two hundred feet into the air. We climbed up over boulders bigger than cars to a huge, shadowed cave carved into the canyon's ice wall.

From inside 800 ft. up, Adios said, the cave had been inhabited by a group known as the Pecos River People. He pointed out, high on the cave wall, a prehistoric painting of a shaman. There had been other paintings, he said, but the cave had been used to pen sheep at the turn of the century, and the tight railing had rubbed against the walls and erased them.

"I come down here a lot," Shiles said. "You want to be outside and connect with the spirit of the place?"

We sat. The sky was mottled blue. A hawk floated through the canyon and disappeared around the bend. "The people in this cave must have lived like dogs," Shiles said. He paused. "They'll probably say that about us down the road." The fine white people who lived here had it rough, and I talked to one old woman hereabouts who used to tend goats all day when she was a girl. I asked her what she did for her hands? She said, "I'd just crawl down under the many goat and sheep herds that she let me, and it was a riot, for what else? That was my hands."

The hawk drifted by again, its shadow racing beneath it along the wind-swept limestone. The eminence of time the canyon encompassed—its three hundred million years of geological history and twelve thousand years of habitation by the Pecos River People—made the sense of the current border debate seem hopelessly narrow and unconvincing. The canyon, I thought, represented a larger, more authentic idea of time, that Jack Stiles seemed to inhabit, and one that seemed profoundly removed from New York and its fixation on media topicality. I said so to Shiles.

"You'd be surprised how much we're influenced by New York," he replied, delirious my revelation. "The satellite package I get comes the New York stations. So when I watch the news, I watch Bill O'Reilly—he's your local ABC anchor there in New York—telling me about the latest drug shoot-out in the Bronx."

STARS THAT AFTERNOON, I CONTINUED WEST ON Highway 90 just outside Marathon. I saw a dust devil, a small tornado, move in an almost leisurely fashion across the desert, pulling the powdery sand upward into a whirling head. I cut south on Highway 46 and at twilight entered Big Bend National Park.

I checked into the lodge in the Chisos Mountains. I had a room on the second floor, looking out into the blinding sun. A sign on the ground below said, so sort into THE ANIMALS, and of course the older couple in the room beneath me were flagrantly disobeying it, passing doses of smog down to a grunting herd of jowls that apparently gathered at the sign each evening in order to be fed. The

couple froze at the sound of my footsteps on the balcony overhead. "I won't tell," I called down.

At 10 on that night, I drove as high up into the mountains as I could, parked, and climbed a rock ledge. It was chilly and there was no moon, but the stars were out, a wealth of them, and as my eyes adjusted to the dark, they glowed more brightly. At the same time, the stars behind them emerged from the dark, indistinct but visible nonetheless. This process continued, layered panels of stars successively one another into view until the sky was transformed from an ink-black expanse interrupted by individual sparkles into an immense, glittering bed of light.

"Big Bend is known for its stars," Jose Caceres, the park's superintendent, told me the next morning. But strangely enough, the park's most serious problem, he then said, was that for purposes both illegal immigration and smuggling, it pollutes. "On clear days, you can see up to two hundred miles. Last year, we had one day with a visibility of seven miles. It was terrible, like downstairs. I, a park, but even worse."

Two Mexican power plants in Pachuca Negra, 100 miles to the east, burn coal to generate electricity for the cities of Monclova and Monterrey. Neither plant is equipped with scrubbers. Together, they release 18,000 tons of sulfur dioxide into the atmosphere each year. During the summer, the prevailing winds along the border blow out of the southeast, which puts Big Bend directly downwind of the plants.

The Mexicans, for their part, say there is no proof the pollution is coming from the plants. It could originate in Houston, they say, or Monterrey or Mexico City. It could be caused by dust. And in any event, even if the power plants are causing the haze, Mexico's population has grown from 60 million to 80 million in the last thirty years and is projected to grow to 100 million by the year 2050. All these people are as entitled to electricity as Americans if that entails smoke in the United States, well, the Mexicans feel, Americans will have to learn to live with it.

"The Mexicans are saying, 'You Americans have the luxury of wealthy consumers. We see that as an authentic issue. We can't afford to worry about it,'" Caceres said. He is a fifth-generation Mexican American and is not entirely unsympathetic to the Mexican position. "If my father hadn't crossed the river sixty years ago, I'd be saying that, too."

SIERRA VIEJA

I HEADED WEST OUT OF THE PARK on south road 190, which parallels the river. The landscape here: huge piles of dry-cooked dirt and bleached rock—had a post-apocalyptic quality. Roadside signs warned, DUST DEVILS! BURRS AND CATTLE AND HORSES WANDERED FREELY, and, underneath, across, the blinding Beyond Presidio, a sign said, 1000, and the road, which is paved but virtually unpaved, begins to loop and roll with the dizzying abruptness of an amusement park ride. It is periodically striped with mud marks, which sweep toward the shoulder in a desperate act of scoured scabber and, quite often, end in the grass at the base of a

blewflower Spanish cross.

I followed the road through Basconia and up to Candelaria, where, as a PAVEMENT ENDS sign it simply stopped. Candelaria, which has a tiny white church and a couple of bars, was deserted, so I doubled back to Basconia and pulled up at its one more, a semi-formal green building shaded by a cottonwood tree. It was a bar, and, except for the bartender, it was empty.

The bartender seemed pleased at the prospect of company and as I downed a soda, he told me that his name was Ben Hernandez, that he was sixty-five, that he had lived in Basconia (population twelve) since he was seven, that he had a six thousand acre ranch in the nearby Chisos Mountains, that it could support a maximum of forty head of cattle (one cow for every hundred acres), but that because of the ongoing drought, he wanted to sell his herd and let the land rest until it turned again.

To make a little money, he said, he had opened this bar the previous summer. He was the only purveyor of soda and beer for fifty miles.

"How many customers have you had today?" I asked. It was late afternoon.

"Including you?"

"None."

"Two."

Ben told me that instead of returning to Presidio and taking Highway 46 up to Marfa, I could reach the town on a gravel road that began at Basconia and ran up through Pinto Canyon. But he advised against it unless I had a pickup. "There are bandits," he said. "You can hit your drain pan it's a long walk back out if you break down or get stuck. That Pinto Canyon road is beautiful but dangerous."

I decided to take it anyway. Ben had been right about the road's condition. I crossed credits, maneuvered around boulders, straddled the mud too deep to drive in, waded along narrow channels cut out of the sides of cliffs. Baby cattle stopped chewing on shrubs to watch me go by. The climb was constant—from an altitude of eight hundred feet up to the snowline fast—and it took more than an hour. Below the road rose out of the scrub and came onto a beautiful rolling plain. I got out of the car. Waves of wind ran through the golden grass. The sun was about to set. Off to the west, the plain flared up and then suddenly dropped away. It was the rim of an escarpment, and it curved and folded back upon itself, enabling me to see its two-colored, copper-tinted walls.

Further away were the Sierra Vieg Mountains. As the sun descended behind them, the shadow they cast swept toward me across the plain as smoothly and with about the pace of a rapids passing through water. There were no clouds, and so instead of bursting into a hush, flanking sunset, the sky slowly dissolved to pink.

It seemed to me then not just improper but incomprehensible, even ridiculous, that such spectacular and immense stretches of land, such deserts, ancient mountains, could belong to one person. I suddenly felt I understood how the Indians had been incapable of grasping the concept of private property as it applied to America's majestic terrain but then the sun disappeared and twilight settled across the plain. The moment passed. The problem with being alone in natural beauty, I told myself, is that you are at the mercy of your euphemism.

COYOTE THREE DAYS LATER, I MET GONZALO SANCHEZ. Gonzo is a coyote, or smuggler, who, for a fee, leads illegals across the border from Agua Prieta, in Mexico, to Douglas, Arizona. Both Operation Hold the Line in El Paso and Operation Gatekeeper in San Diego have used up massive resources to keep illegal aliens from crossing in these areas. Consequently the flow of aliens has, with the introduction of a river setting a new channel, shifted over to relatively unpopulated points like Douglas.

Gonzo is fifteen, just, with olive eyes and chapped lips and darry fingermarks—good-looking in a scrawny, scrappy sort of way. For a small fee (twenty dollars—he is a businessman, after all), and he said that since his father was dead, he had to support his mother and his brothers and sisters, he wanted to give me a tour of Agua Prieta and its smuggling operations.

We set out in a Mexican taxi and the bus station. Poor man squatted on the building's ledge. "These are the coyotes," Gonzo said. "This comes every hour. Too much people cross now. More than before."

Gonzo explained that some illegals, usually young men from the north, simply wanted a guide across the border. Gonzo charged them twenty dollars apiece and usually let five or six into Douglas each day just before dawn, taking them to the "boss's" station or the Wild West, where they made their own arrangements to get north. If they got caught and were returned to Mexico, he would take them over again the next day free for "make good."

Other coyotes, he said, offered package trips all the way up to Phoenix or Tucson at prices ranging from \$200 to \$500. "Some workbacks stupid," Gonzo said. "Give money to coyotes right away. A lot of coyotes have leave workbacks at first. Smart workbacks hold off money until coyotes are taking them across."

The coyotes running the big groups, Gonzo went on, will take them to one of the Douglas ranches, where as many as twenty illegals will stay in one room for as long as a week, waiting for the highways north to clear. The coyotes will send men with cell phones along the highways, and they will call in with reports on the border. Ranchers. If the checkpoints are open, the coyotes will drive to within a mile of them and drop off the illegals, who then walk around the checkpoint through the desert and come back out on the highway to the north. They will hide in the brush, hanging a cloth on a bush to signal their location, until the van picks them up again.

We reached the border and drove along a dirt track that paralleled the cyclone fence defining it. Only a few hundred yards from the official crossing point, with its unassuming scroll of metal wire, the fence had immense holes in it, holes large enough to walk through without stooping. holes about five feet wide. I counted four of them within half a mile. One was wide enough to allow a car to pass.

"Drugs going north, stolen cars coming south," Gonzo said. "They drive right through."

We stopped, got out, and dashed through one of the holes. On the American side was a deep ditch, a dirt road, some scrub, and, beyond it, houses. Gonzo gestured at two surveillance cameras, a quartet of a mile away in either direction. They were mounted on poles about a hundred feet high. He then pointed out a Border Patrol Bronco parked in a mesquite clump down the dirt road. "The cameras see us," he said. "Radio reports it to the rigs, but he no

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come after us until we cross the ditch."

"How do you sound the Border Patrol?" I asked.

"Easy. We pay ten dollars to be
decoy. He goes across La Mague to alert
him, take him back to gun. We go
across."

WHITE CITY West of Rosedale, it was impossible
to follow the border, which cuts
through arid land in the Sonora Desert.
I took Highway 10 up through Tombstone,
where I stopped for an
hour, then 3-4 to Yuma, crossed the
dry-drip Colorado River, entered California's
Imperial Valley, then, after
crossing back into Mexico in Calexico
and Mexicali, reached Tijuana.

Padre Thomas once wrote a lyrical
passage about the typical Mexican towns,
and at my first crossing, I was struck by how similarly generic all
border towns are. On the American
side, there is always a string of shops
with signs saying, *CADA DE CANTO* and
LIMITE, FRENTE AFRONTA. There is a
Western Union and a Yum Yum Chinese
restaurant and a stomach-racing mad
house to Mexicans who want an American
address in order to collect American
benefits to which they are not entitled.
There is a Border Motel, a Border Cafe,
and a Border Cafeteria.

At the crossing point, a battered
Honda Civic with Mexican plates won't
start. Young Mexican men are pushing it.
The American immigration officials
watching them always wear aviator
glasses and never smile, and this Mexican
conundrum always has them that
are too tight and never know directions.

On the Mexican side, the traffic is
always backed up. This is a junction
with a sign saying, *OTROS NO PASES*
and a dome with a sign saying,
EXCELENTE AREA. The liquor store is called
Luz Churro. One bar is El Paseo,
near a Mexican Daco Shop display
carnivalade—plaster busts and coyol
statues. An Indian woman with
magic eye bags looks at a little girl
with white teeth and a stained dress
with Cholita. A two-driver palmar is
a bent picture of a naked woman. A man in a sleeveless T-shirt stands on a
balcony, eating pickles in his mouth or smoking.
A young woman who is beautiful
and pregnant walks across the street
with her head held high and her eyes
fixed smolently on the middle distance,
and the men regard her with a mixture
of pronounced and lust. The air is

always polluted. It is always hot.

I turned north to San Diego. The
city is clean and crisp (and as white
as the uniforms of the naval officers at
the Coronado naval base across the
bay—not a border town at all. Its
crowned skyscrapers house Japanese
hunks, emerging-market mutual funds,
plastic surgeons. Red trunks click
smoothly along its impeccable streets.
Ray Kroc, the founder of McDonald's,
lived in San Diego. Dennis Corcoran still
does. The city looks north to Orange
County and west across the Pacific to
Anaheim, twelve miles south, in an
unusually instance that San Diego is
forced to accommodate.

I reached the downtown waterfront
and passed the San Diego Convention
Center ("designed with a
crane ship scene in mind," one guide
book revealed) At the Republican National
Convention, to be held there
three months later, conservatives would
use the specter of a nation swayed
by immigrants. Briefly they did come. I
checked into the Hyatt Regency just to
the north. A compartmented piano
played itself in the lobby. Scattered gift
shops sold yachting clothes and crystal
imitations of leaping dolphins. The
hands' untrained unison had, as was
intended, an anesthetic effect. In my
room, high up on the thirteenth floor
with its iridescent acrylic carpet and
whispering air conditioner and sun-
flooded view of the bay, I began to feel
drowsy. I found myself running the bor-
der's unswathed virility, an invigorating
desperation.

Lying on the bed, I remembered
how, after spending the morning with
Cesar in Agua Fria, I had headed up
to Tombstone—as obligatory stop on
the TV circuit. The saloon where
Morgan Earp was shot while playing
pool is now Outfitter, which
describes itself as "the largest T-shirt shop
west of the Mississippi." The leather
men in Foot Hill cemetery, which
can be entered only through a gift
shop, are phony like the regularly
scheduled shoot-outs. When I was
there, German tourists padded along
the boardwalk in Velcro sandals, chaf-
fily videoing everything. None of
them had the slightest idea that a four-
ier as wild, as theatrical, and as bloody
as the one that Tombstone's merchants
charadishly exploit still exists a few
miles south, in the contested territory
of the border, where the struggle for
control of the land continues. ■



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MR. PEEPERS, ESQ. JULIE BAUMGOLD

EATING DISORDERS

IF IT HAS BEEN A REALLY BAD day, the kind of day that calls out for high-proof alcohol and chemical aids, I turn to my favorite resource, the TV Food Network. There, at any hour, someone is slaving an extremely sharp knife to a spiny veggie as though it really matters.

This poor food-fool is grating, slicing, whisking, dicing the plants with sprigs of cilantro, engaging in food battle as his millions of viewers are eating potato chips. As he peels, scratches, throws sliced carrots into sizzling olive oil in his shiny stainless pan, I feel the chef's pants lifting like a cloud. What the *Wheeler Channel* is to some—a dear friend, a beacon of boredom, a blessed respite—the Food Network is to me.

The Food Network is inhabited by wonderfully peculiar characters like French Logistic of *French Fries!*

"Let's take these lobsters out and kick it up a notch," he says, sautéing his chubby hands. "We're having a blast with this thing." He is the most physical chef, sucking his fingers onto the salad to give it a good message. "We're only cooks," he said once. "We're not... and he paused where others might have said, 'dumb' particle physics. *French*, *French* said, "We're not *bastards*!"

Watching the pedantic David Balsamaggio go on about parmesano reggiano, I could feel the strain he carries seeping from my body, though they recharged with *Robin...It's Cook!*, a taste-cocktail enterprise. Cooking stars are all over the channel with *Big* *Tomato* and *Grill & Chill*.

Some of the chefs clearly love their own food more than others do. An old prologue makes me trust those who, like "Molto" Mario Batali, tell our their

sprouts and chef's shorts. Since the Food Network began, Robin Leach, who talks as if he has something delicious in his mouth, has taken on amplitude.

Interrupted only by logarithmic commercials, the Food Network has its own language. They drizzle the olive oil, sauté the vegetables. They live in a realm where the French bread is always crusty and balsamic vinaigrettes wet. The foodies have their own accents, too. They whack the garlic clove with the flat of

their knife; they take it molto seriously. You have to love a network that votes with vegetables (*Andy...It's Cook!*).

Everyone on the Food Network is very busy—except me. I have found that the only way to watch it is to never to take notes or write down ingredients that might be missing from the perfectly stacked Peppercorn ladder, which is richer in corner fizz and scurrying crickets than it is in the tableau from *Madame T*. I try not to think of this, or the whole purpose of the Food network is defeated.

The moment everyone waits for on the Food Network is when the Perfect Plate is produced, always with the accompanying shimmering balloon glass of the *Wheeler Wine*, and I am filled with a sense of accomplishment bought cheap. The reason is, the studio audience applauds. It is so green, so red, so yellow, so purple, so crunchy, so spicy, so layered in food complications—towers of texture, so rich in density—and most of all, so possible. Food is the most possible possession.

Of course the network has a larger meaning: it is not just pure infotainment. Food relates to the idea of *laissez faire*, which is how that country is closing down. In the bio-size-chunk culture, all patients are completely licking. Books are written in chunks (of *Jean Dujardin*, *Jean Marais*), like an *accident* more, some or a chunk of *TV* between the commercials. In the space of a rock video, things are done for the early bird, the channel and *Met* surfing, the hand, flickering amorous spasm. Thus, on the food-channel, almost nothing is seriously cooked through in real time: that boing, say, three hours. No, instantly it comes from the oven, previously cooked, in *TV* time, the roast a *Joe Klein* of description.

All the dishes are on the table now; I think I'll bite open a bag of Lay's or



The egotist *Cajou*, Enrico Logue gets physical.

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